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LOVERS' VOWS.

A

PLAY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

PERFORMING AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

FROM THE GERMAN OF KOTZEBUE,

BY

MRS. INCHBALD.

NINTH EDITION,

LONDON:

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1798.

[*Price, Two Shillings.*]

PREFACE.

IT would appear like affectation to offer an apology for any ſcenes or paſſages omitted or added, in this play, different from the original: its reception has given me confidence to ſuppoſe what I have done is right; for Kotzebue's "Child of Love" in Germany, was never more attractive than "Lovers' Vows" has been in England.

I could trouble my reader with many pages to diſcloſe the motives which induced me to alter, with the exception of a few common-place ſentences only, the characters of Count Caſſel, Amelia, and Verdun the Butler—I could explain why the part of the Count, as in the original, would inevitably have condemned the whole Play,—I could inform my reader why I have pourtrayed the Baron in many particulars different from the German author, and carefully prepared the audience for the grand effect of the laſt ſcene in the fourth act, by totally changing his conduct towards his ſon as a robber—why I gave ſentences of a humourous kind to the parts of the two Cottagers—why I was compelled, on many occaſions, to compreſs the matter of a ſpeech of three or four pages into one of three or four lines—and why,

in

in no one inſtance, I would ſuffer my reſpect for Kotzebue to interfere with my profound reſpect for the judgment of a Britiſh audience. But I flatter myſelf ſuch a vindication is not requiſite to the enlightened reader, who, I truſt, on comparing this drama with the original, will at once ſee all my motives — and the dull admirer of mere verbal tranſlation, it would be vain to endeavour to inſpire with taſte by inſtruction.

Wholly unacquainted with the German language, a literal tranſlation of the "Child of Love" was given to me by the manager of Covent Garden Theatre to be fitted, as my opinion ſhould direct, for his ſtage. This tranſlation, tedious and vapid as moſt literal tranſlations are, had the peculiar diſadvantage of having been put into our language by a German — of courſe it came to me in broken Engliſh. It was no ſlight misfortune to have an example of bad grammar, falſe metaphors and ſimilies, with all the uſual errors of feminine diction, placed before a female writer. But if, diſdaining the conſtruction of ſentences,—the preciſe decorum of the cold grammarian,—ſhe has caught the ſpirit of her author, — if, in every altered ſcene, —ſtill adhering to the nice propriety of his meaning, and ſtill keeping in view his great cataſtrophe, — ſhe has agitated her audience with all the various paſſions he depicted, the rigid criticiſm of the cloſet will be but a ſlender abatement of the pleaſure reſulting from the ſanction of an applauding theatre.

It has not been one of the leaſt gratifications I have received from the ſucceſs of this play, that the original German, from which it is taken, was printed in the year 1791; and yet, that during all the period which has intervened, no perſon of talents

talents or literary knowledge (though there are in this country many of that deſcription, who profeſs to ſearch for German dramas) has thought it worth employment to make a tranſlation of the work. I can only account for ſuch an apparent neglect of Kotzebue's "Child of Love," by the conſideration of its original unfitneſs for an Engliſh ſtage, and the difficulty of making it otherwiſe—a difficulty which once appeared ſo formidable, that I ſeriouſly thought I muſt have declined it even after I had proceeded ſome length in the undertaking.

Independently of objections to the character of the Count, the dangerous inſignificance of the Butler, in the original, embarraſſed me much. I found, if he was retained in the *Dramatis Perſonæ*, ſomething more muſt be ſupplied than the author had aſſigned him: I ſuggeſted the verſes I have introduced; but not being bleſſed with the Butler's happy art of rhyming, I am indebted for them, except the ſeventh and eleventh ſtanzas in the firſt of his poetic ſtories, to the author of the prologue.

The part of Amelia has been a very particular object of my ſolicitude and alteration: the ſame ſituations which the author gave her remain, but almoſt all the dialogue of the character I have changed: the forward and unequivocal manner in which ſhe announces her affection to her lover, in the original, would have been revolting to an Engliſh audience: the paſſion of love, repreſented on the ſtage, is certain to be inſipid or diſguſting, unleſs it creates ſmiles or tears: Amelia's love, by Kotzebue, is indelicately blunt, and yet void of mirth or ſadneſs: I have endeavoured to attach the attention and ſympathy of the audience by whimſical inſinuations, rather than coarſe abrupt-

abruptneſs—the ſame woman, I conceive, whom the author drew, with the ſelf-ſame ſentiments, but with manners adapted to the Engliſh rather than the German taſte; and if the favour in which this character is held by the audience, together with every ſentence and incident which I have preſumed to introduce in the play, may be offered as the criterion of my ſkill, I am ſufficiently rewarded for the taſk I have performed.

In ſtating the foregoing circumſtances relating to this production, I hope not to be ſuſpected of arrogating to my own exertions only, the popularity which has attended "The Child of Love," under the title of "Lovers Vows"—the exertions of every performer engaged in the play deſervedly claim a ſhare in its ſucceſs; and I moſt ſincerely thank them for the high importance of their aid.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

SPOKEN BY Mr. MURRAY.

POETS have oft' declared, in doleful ſtrain,
That o'er dramatic tracks they beat in vain,
Hopeleſs that novelty will ſpring to ſight;
For life and nature are exhauſted quite.
Though plaints like theſe have rung from age to age,
Too kind are writers to deſert the ſtage;
And if they, fruitleſs, ſearch for unknown prey,
At leaſt they dreſs *old game* a *novel way*;
But ſuch lamentings ſhould be heard no more,
For modern taſte turns Nature out of door;
Who ne'er again her former ſway will boaſt,
Till, to complete her works, *ſhe ſtarts a ghoſt.*
If ſuch the mode, what can we hope to-night,
Who raſhly dare approach without a ſprite?
No dreadful cavern, and no midnight ſcream,
No roſin flames, nor e'en one flitting gleam.
Nought of the charms ſo potent to invite
The monſtrous charms of terrible delight.
Our preſent theme the German Muſe ſupplies,
But rather aims to ſoften than ſurpriſe.
Yet, with her woes ſhe ſtrives ſome ſmiles to blend,
Intent as well to cheer as to amend:
On her own native ſoil ſhe knows the art
To charm the fancy, and to touch the heart.
If, then, ſhe mirth and pathos can expreſs,
Though leſs engaging in an Engliſh dreſs,
Let her from Britiſh hearts no peril fear,
But, as a STRANGER *, find a welcome here.

* Hamlet.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Baron WILDENHAIM -	*Mr. Murray.*
Count CASSEL - - -	*Mr. Knight.*
ANHALT - - -	*Mr. H. Johnſton.*
FREDERICK - - -	*Mr. Pope.*
VERDUN *the* BUTLER - -	*Mr. Munden.*
LANDLORD - - -	*Mr. Thompſon.*
COTTAGER - - -	*Mr. Davenport.*
FARMER - - -	*Mr. Rees.*
COUNTRYMAN - - -	*Mr. Dyke.*

Huntſmen, Servants, &c.

WOMEN.

AGATHA FRIBURG - -	*Mrs. Johnſon.*
AMELIA WILDENHAIM - -	*Mrs. H. Johnſton.*
COTTAGER'S WIFE - -	*Mrs. Davenport.*
COUNTRY GIRL - - -	*Miſs Leſerve.*

SCENE, Germany—Time of repreſentation one day.

LOVERS' VOWS.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A high road, a town at a diſtance—A ſmall inn on one ſide the road—A cottage on the other.*

The LANDLORD *of the inn leads* AGATHA *by the hand out of his houſe.*

LANDLORD.

NO, no! no room for you any longer—It is the fair to-day in the next village; as great a fair as any in the German dominions. The country people with their wives and children take up every corner we have.

AGATHA.

You will turn a poor ſick woman out of doors who has ſpent her laſt farthing in your houſe.

LANDLORD.

For that very reaſon; becauſe ſhe *has* ſpent her laſt farthing.

AGATHA.

I can work.

LANDLORD.

You can hardly move your hands.

AGATHA.

My ſtrength will come again.

LANDLORD.

Then *you* may come again.

AGATHA.

What am I to do? Where ſhall I go?

LANDLORD.

It is fine weather—you may go any where.

AGATHA.

Who will give me a morſel of bread to ſatisfy my hunger?

LANDLORD.

Sick people eat but little.

AGATHA.

Hard, unfeeling man, have pity.

LANDLORD.

When times are hard, pity is too expenſive for a poor man. Aſk alms of the different people that go by.

AGATHA.

Beg! I would rather ſtarve.

LANDLORD.

You may beg, and ſtarve too. What a fine lady you are! Many an honeſt woman has been obliged to beg. Why ſhould not you? [Agatha *ſits down upon a large ſtone under a tree.*] For inſtance, here comes ſomebody; and I will teach you how to begin. [*A Countryman, with working tools, croſſes the road.*] Good day, neighbour Nicholas.

COUNTRYMAN.

Good day. [*Stops.*

LANDLORD.

Won't you give a trifle to this poor woman? [*Countryman takes no notice, but walks off.*] That would not do—the poor man has nothing himſelf but

but what he gets by hard labour. Here comes a rich farmer; perhaps he will give you ſomething.

Enter FARMER.

LANDLORD.

Good morning to you, Sir. Under yon tree ſits a poor woman in diſtreſs, who is in need of your charity.

FARMER.

Is ſhe not aſhamed of herſelf? Why don't ſhe work?

LANDLORD.

She has had a fever.—If you would but pay for one dinner—

FARMER.

The harveſt has been but indifferent, and my cattle and ſheep have ſuffered by a diſtemper. [*Exit.*

LANDLORD.

My fat, ſmiling face was not made for begging: you'll have more luck with your thin, ſour one—ſo, I'll leave you to yourſelf. [*Exit.*

[Agatha *riſes and comes forward.*]

AGATHA.

Oh Providence! thou haſt till this hour protected me, and haſt given me fortitude not to deſpair. Receive my humble thanks, and reſtore me to health, for the ſake of my poor ſon, the innocent cauſe of my ſufferings, and yet my only comfort. [*kneeling*] Oh, grant that I may ſee him once more! See him improved in ſtrength of mind and body; and that by thy gracious mercy he may never be viſited with afflictions great as mine. [*After a pauſe*] Protect his father too, merciful Providence, and pardon his crime of perjury to me! Here, in the face of heaven (ſuppoſing my end approaching, and that I can but a few days

longer ſtruggle with want and ſorrow), here, I ſolemnly forgive my ſeducer for all the ills, the accumulated evils which his allurements, his deceit, and cruelty, have for twenty years paſt drawn upon me.

Enter a COUNTRY GIRL *with a baſket.*

AGATHA [*near fainting*].

My dear child, if you could ſpare me a trifle—

GIRL.

I have not a farthing in the world—But I am going to market to ſell my eggs, and as I come back I'll give you three-pence—And I'll be back as ſoon as ever I can. [*Exit.*

AGATHA.

There was a time when I was as happy as this country girl, and as willing to aſſiſt the poor in diſtreſs. [*Retires to the tree and ſits down.*]

Enter FREDERICK—*He is dreſſed in a German ſoldier's uniform, has a knapſack on his ſhoulders, appears in high ſpirits, and ſtops at the door of the inn.*

FREDERICK.

Halt! Stand at eaſe! It is a very hot day—A draught of good wine will not be amiſs. But firſt let me conſult my purſe. [*Takes out a couple of pieces of money, which he turns about in his hand.*] This will do for a breakfaſt—the other remains for my dinner; and in the evening I ſhall be at home. [*Calls out*] Ha! Halloo! Landlord! [*Takes notice of* Agatha, *who is leaning againſt the tree.*] Who is that? A poor ſick woman! She don't beg; but her appearance makes me think ſhe is in want. Muſt one always wait to give till one is aſked? Shall I go without my breakfaſt now, or loſe my dinner?

dinner? The firſt I think is the beſt. Ay, I don't want a breakfaſt, for dinner time will ſoon be here. To do good ſatisfies both hunger and thirſt. [*Going towards her with the money in his hand.*] Take this, good woman.

[*She ſtretches her hand for the gift, looks ſtedfaſtly at him, and cries out with aſtoniſhment and joy.*]

AGATHA.

Frederick!

FREDERICK.

Mother! [*With amazement and grief.*] Mother! For God's ſake what is this! How is this! And why do I find my mother thus? Speak!

AGATHA.

I cannot ſpeak, dear ſon! [*Riſing and embracing him*] My dear Frederick! The joy is too great—I was not prepared—

FREDERICK.

Dear mother, compoſe yourſelf: [*leans her head againſt his breaſt*] now, then, be comforted. How ſhe trembles! She is fainting.

AGATHA.

I am ſo weak, and my head ſo giddy — I had nothing to eat all yeſterday.

FREDERICK.

Good heavens! Here is my little money, take it all! Oh mother! mother! [*Runs to the inn*] Landlord! Landlord! [*knocking violently at the door.*]

LANDLORD.

What is the matter?

FREDERICK.

A bottle of wine—quick, quick!

LANDLORD [*ſurprized*].

A bottle of wine! For who?

FRE-

FREDERICK.

For me. Why do you aſk? Why don't you make haſte?

LANDLORD.

Well, well, Mr. ſoldier: but can you pay for it?

FREDERICK.

Here is money—make haſte, or I'll break every window in your houſe.

LANDLORD.

Patience! Patience! [*goes off.*

FREDERICK [*to* Agatha].

You were hungry yeſterday when I ſat down to a comfortable dinner. You were hungry when I partook of a good ſupper. Oh! Why is ſo much bitter mixed with the joy of my return?

AGATHA.

Be patient, my dear Frederick. Since I ſee you, I am well. But I *have been* very ill: ſo ill, that I deſpaired of ever beholding you again.

FREDERICK.

Ill, and I was not with you? I will, now, never leave you more. Look, mother, how tall and ſtrong I am grown. Theſe arms can now afford you ſupport. They can, and ſhall, procure you ſubſiſtence.

[Landlord *coming out of the houſe with a ſmall pitcher.*]

LANDLORD.

Here is wine—a moſt delicious nectar. [*Aſide.*] It is only Rheniſh; but it will paſs for the beſt old Hock.

FREDERICK [*impatiently ſnatching the pitcher*].

Give it me.

No,

LANDLORD.

No, no — the money firſt. One ſhilling and two-pence, if you pleaſe.

[Frederick *gives him money.*]

FREDERICK.

This is all I have.—Here, here, mother.

[*While ſhe drinks* Landlord *counts the money.*]

LANDLORD.

Three halfpence too ſhort! However, one muſt be charitable.

[*Exit* Landlord.

AGATHA.

I thank you, my dear Frederick — Wine revives me — Wine from the hand of my ſon gives me almoſt a new life.

FREDERICK.

Don't ſpeak too much, mother. — Take your time.

AGATHA.

Tell me, dear child, how you have paſſed the five years ſince you left me.

FREDERICK.

Both good and bad, mother. To day plenty—to-morrow not ſo much—And ſometimes nothing at all.

AGATHA.

You have not written to me this long while.

FREDERICK.

Dear mother, conſider the great diſtance I was from you! — And then, in the time of war, how often letters miſcarry. — Beſides ——

AGATHA.

No matter now I ſee you. But have you obtained your diſcharge?

FRE-

FREDERICK.

Oh, no, mother — I have leave of abſence only for two months; and that for a particular reaſon. But I will not quit you ſo ſoon, now I find you are in want of my aſſiſtance.

AGATHA.

No, no, Frederick; your viſit will make me ſo well, that I ſhall in a very ſhort time recover ſtrength to work again; and you muſt return to your regiment when your furlough is expired. But you told me leave of abſence was granted you for a particular reaſon.—What reaſon?

FREDERICK.

When I left you five years ago, you gave me every thing you could afford, and all you thought would be neceſſary for me. But one trifle you forgot, which was, the certificate of my birth from the church-book. — You know in this country there is nothing to be done without it. At the time of parting from you, I little thought it could be of that conſequence to me which I have ſince found it would have been. Once I became tired of a ſoldier's life, and in the hope I ſhould obtain my diſcharge, offered myſelf to a maſter to learn a profeſſion; but his queſtion was, "Where is your certificate from the church-book of the pariſh in which you were born?" It vexed me that I had not it to produce, for my comrades laughed at my diſappointment. My captain behaved kinder, for he gave me leave to come home to fetch it—and you ſee, mother, here I am.

[*During this ſpeech* Agatha *is confuſed and agitated.*

AGATHA.

So, you are come for the purpoſe of fetching your certificate from the church-book.

FRE-

FREDERICK.

Yes, mother.

AGATHA.

Oh! oh!

FREDERICK.

What is the matter? [*She burſts into tears.*] For Heaven's ſake, mother, tell me what's the matter?

AGATHA.

You have no certificate.

FREDERICK.

No!

AGATHA.

No.—The laws of Germany excluded you from being regiſtered at your birth—for—you are a natural ſon!

FREDERICK [*ſtarts—after a pauſe*].

So!—And who is my father?

AGATHA.

Oh Frederick, your wild looks are daggers to my heart. Another time.

FREDERICK [*endeavouring to conceal his emotion*].

No, no—I am ſtill your ſon—and you are ſtill my mother. Only tell me, who is my father?

AGATHA.

When we parted five years ago, you were too young to be intruſted with a ſecret of ſo much importance.—But the time is come when I can, in confidence, open my heart, and unload that burthen with which it has been long oppreſſed. And yet, to reveal my errors to my child, and ſue for his mild judgment on my conduct——

FREDERICK.

You have nothing to ſue for; only explain this myſtery.

AGATHA.

I will, I will. But — my tongue is locked with remorſe and ſhame. You muſt not look at me.

FREDERICK.

Not look at you! Curſed be that ſon who could find his mother guilty, although the world ſhould call her ſo.

AGATHA.

Then liſten to me, and take notice of that village, [*pointing*] of that caſtle, and of that church. In that village I was born—in that church I was baptiſed. My parents were poor, but reputable farmers.—The lady of that caſtle and eſtate requeſted them to let me live with her, and ſhe would provide for me through life. They reſigned me; and at the age of fourteen I went to my patroneſs. She took pleaſure to inſtruct me in all kinds of female literature and accompliſhments, and three happy years had paſſed under her protection, when her only ſon, who was an officer in the Saxon ſervice, obtained permiſſion to come home. I had never ſeen him before—he was a handſome young man—in my eyes a prodigy; for he talked of love, and promiſed me marriage. He was the firſt man who had ever ſpoken to me on ſuch a ſubject.—His flattery made me vain, and his repeated vows——Don't look at me, dear Frederick!—I can ſay no more. [Frederick *with his eyes caſt down, takes her hand, and puts it to his heart.*] Oh! oh! my ſon! I was intoxicated by the fervent careſſes of a young, inexperienced, capricious man, and did not recover from the delirium till it was too late.

FREDERICK [*after a pauſe*].

Go on.—Let me know more of my father.

AGATHA.

When the time drew near that I could no longer con-

conceal my guilt and ſhame, my ſeducer prevailed on me not to expoſe him to the reſentment of his mother. He renewed his former promiſes of marriage at her death;—on which relying, I gave him my word to be ſecret—and I have to this hour buried his name deep in my heart.

FREDERICK.

Proceed, proceed! give me full information—— I will have courage to hear it all. [*Greatly agitated.*]

AGATHA.

His leave of abſence expired, he returned to his regiment, depending on my promiſe, and well aſſured of my eſteem. As ſoon as my ſituation became known, I was queſtioned, and received many ſevere reproaches: but I refuſed to confeſs who was my undoer; and for that obſtinacy was turned from the caſtle.—I went to my parents; but their door was ſhut againſt me. My mother, indeed, wept as ſhe bade me quit her ſight for ever; but my father wiſhed increaſed affliction might befall me.

FREDERICK [*weeping*].

Be quick with your narrative, or you'll break my heart.

AGATHA.

I now ſought protection from the old clergyman of the pariſh. He received me with compaſſion. On my knees I begged forgiveneſs for the ſcandal I had cauſed to his pariſhioners; promiſed amendment; and he ſaid he did not doubt me. Through his recommendation I went to town; and hid in humble lodgings, procured the means of ſubſiſtence by teaching to the neighbouring children what I had learnt under the tuition of my benefactreſs.—To inſtruct you, my Frederick, was my care and my delight; and in return for your filial love I would not thwart your wiſhes when they led to a

ſoldier's life: but I ſaw you go from me with an aching heart. Soon after, my health declined, I was compelled to give up my employment, and, by degrees, became the object you now ſee me. But, let me add, before I cloſe my calamitous ſtory, that —when I left the good old clergyman, taking along with me his kind advice and his bleſſing, I left him with a firm determination to fulfil the vow I had made of repentance and amendment. I *have* fulfilled it—and now, Frederick, you may look at me again. [*He embraces her.*]

FREDERICK.

But my father all this time? [*mournfully*] I apprehend he died.

AGATHA.

No—he married.

FREDERICK.

Married!

AGATHA.

A woman of virtue——of noble birth and immenſe fortune. Yet, [*weeps*] I had written to him many times; had deſcribed your infant innocence and wants; had glanced obliquely at former promiſes—

FREDERICK [*rapidly*].

No anſwer to theſe letters?

AGATHA.

Not a word.—But in the time of war, you know, letters miſcarry.

FREDERICK.

Nor did he ever return to this eſtate?

AGATHA.

No—ſince the death of his mother this caſtle has only been inhabited by ſervants—for he ſettled as far off as Alſace, upon the eſtate of his wife.

FRE-

FREDERICK.

I will carry you in my arms to Alſace. No—why ſhould I ever know my father, if he is a villain! My heart is ſatisfied with a mother.—No—I will not go to him. I will not diſturb his peace—I leave that taſk to his conſcience. What ſay you, mother, can't we do without him? [*Struggling between his tears and his pride.*] We don't want him. I will write directly to my captain. Let the conſequence be what it will, leave you again I cannot. Should I be able to get my diſcharge, I will work all day at the plough, and all the night with my pen. It will do, mother, it will do! Heaven's goodneſs will aſſiſt me—it will proſper the endeavours of a dutiful ſon for the ſake of a helpleſs mother.

AGATHA [*preſſes him to her breaſt*].

Where could be found ſuch another ſon?

FREDERICK.

But tell me my father's name, that I may know how to ſhun him.

AGATHA.

Baron Wildenhaim.

FREDERICK.

Baron Wildenhaim! I ſhall never forget it.—Oh! you are near fainting. Your eyes are caſt down. What's the matter? Speak, mother!

AGATHA.

Nothing particular.—Only fatigued with talking. I wiſh to take a little reſt.

FREDERICK.

I did not conſider that we have been all this time in the open road. [*Goes to the Inn, and knocks at the door.*] Here, Landlord!

LAND-

LANDLORD *re-enters.*

LANDLORD.

Well, what is the matter now?

FREDERICK.

Make haſte, and get a bed ready for this good woman.

LANDLORD [*with a ſneer*].

A bed for this good woman! ha, ha, ha! She ſlept laſt night in that pent-houſe; ſo ſhe may to-night. [*Exit, ſhutting the door.*

FREDERICK.

You are an infamous—[*goes back to his mother*] Oh! my poor mother—[*runs to the Cottage at a little diſtance, and knocks*]. Ha! halloo! Who is there?

Enter COTTAGER.

COTTAGER.

Good day, young ſoldier.—What is it you want?

FREDERICK.

Good friend, look at that poor woman. She is periſhing in the public road! It is my mother.—Will you give her a ſmall corner in your hut? I beg for mercy's ſake—Heaven will reward you.

COTTAGER.

Can't you ſpeak quietly? I underſtand you very well. [*Calls at the door of the hut*] Wife, ſhake up our bed — here's a poor ſick woman wants it. [*Enter* WIFE]. Why could not you ſay all this in fewer words? Why ſuch a long preamble? Why for mercy's ſake, and heaven's reward? Why talk about reward for ſuch trifles as theſe? Come, let us lead her in; and welcome ſhe ſhall be to a bed, as good as I can give her; and to our homely fare.

FRE-

FREDERICK.

Ten thouſand thanks, and bleſſings on you!

WIFE.

Thanks and bleſſings! here's a piece of work indeed about nothing! Good ſick lady, lean on my ſhoulder [*To* Frederick]. Thanks and reward indeed! Do you think huſband and I have lived to theſe years, and don't know our duty? Lean on my ſhoulder. [*Exeunt into the Cottage.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A room in the Cottage.*

AGATHA, COTTAGER, *his* WIFE, *and* FREDERICK *discovered* — AGATHA *reclined upon a wooden bench*, FREDERICK *leaning over her.*

FREDERICK.

GOOD people have you nothing to give her? Nothing that's nouriſhing.

WIFE.

Run, huſband, run, and fetch a bottle of wine from the landlord of the inn.

FREDERICK.

No, no—his wine is as bad as his heart: ſhe has drank ſome of it, which I am afraid has turned to poiſon.

COTTAGER.

Suppoſe, wife, you look for a new-laid egg?

WIFE.

Or a drop of brandy, huſband — that moſtly cures me.

FREDERICK.

Do you hear, mother—will you, mother? [Agatha *makes a ſign with her hand as if ſhe could not take any thing.*] She will not. Is there no doctor in this neighbourhood?

WIFE.

At the end of the village there lives a horſe-doctor. I have never heard of any other.

FRE-

FREDERICK.

What ſhall I do? She is dying. My mother is dying—Pray for her, good people!

AGATHA.

Make yourſelf eaſy, dear Frederick, I am well, only weak—Some wholeſome nouriſhment—

FREDERICK.

Yes, mother, directly—directly. [*Aſide*] Oh! where ſhall I—no money—not a farthing left.

WIFE.

Oh, dear me! Had you not paid the rent yeſterday, huſband—

COTTAGER.

I then, ſhould know what to do. But as I hope for mercy, I have not a penny in my houſe.

FREDERICK.

Then I muſt—[*Apart, coming forward*]—Yes, I will go, and beg.—But ſhould I be refuſed—I will then—I leave my mother in your care, good people—Do all you can for her, I beſeech you! I ſhall ſoon be with you again. [*Goes off in haſte and confuſion.*]

COTTAGER.

If he ſhould go to our parſon, I am ſure he would give him ſomething.

[Agatha *having revived by degrees during the ſcene, riſes.*]

AGATHA.

Is that good old man ſtill living, who was miniſter here ſome time ago?

WIFE.

No—It pleaſed Providence to take that worthy man to heaven two years ago.—We have loſt in him both a friend and a father. We ſhall never get ſuch another.

COTTAGER.

Wife, wife, our preſent rector is likewiſe a very good man.

WIFE.

Yes! But he is ſo very young.

COTTAGER.

Our late parſon was once young too.

WIFE [*to* Agatha.]

This young man being tutor in our Baron's family, he was very much beloved by them all; and ſo the Baron gave him this living in conſequence.

COTTAGER.

And well he deſerved it, for his pious inſtructions to our young lady: who is, in conſequence, good, and friendly to every body.

AGATHA.

What young lady do you mean?

COTTAGER.

Our Baron's daughter.

AGATHA.

Is ſhe here?

WIFE.

Dear me! Don't you know that? I thought every body had known that. It is almoſt five weeks ſince the Baron and all his family arrived at the caſtle.

AGATHA.

Baron Wildenhaim?

WIFE.

Yes, Baron Wildenhaim.

AGATHA.

And his lady?

COTTAGER.

His lady died in France many miles from hence, and

and her death, I ſuppoſe, was the cauſe of his coming to this eſtate—For the Baron has not been here till within theſe five weeks ever ſince he was married. We regretted his abſence much, and his arrival has cauſed great joy.

WIFE [*addreſſing her diſcourſe to* Agatha.]

By all accounts the Baroneſs was very haughty; and very whimſical.

COTTAGER.

Wife, wife, never ſpeak ill of the dead. Say what you pleaſe againſt the living, but not a word againſt the dead.

WIFE.

And yet, huſband, I believe the dead care the leaſt what is ſaid againſt them—And ſo, if you pleaſe, I'll tell my ſtory. The late Baroneſs was, they ſay, haughty and proud; and they do ſay, the Baron was not ſo happy as he might have been; but he, bleſs him, our good Baron is ſtill the ſame as when a boy. Soon after Madam had cloſed her eyes, he left France, and came to Wildenhaim, his native country.

COTTAGER.

Many times has he joined in our village dances. Afterwards, when he became an officer, he was rather wild, as moſt young men are.

WIFE.

Yes, I remember when he fell in love with poor Agatha, Friburg's daughter: what a piece of work that was—It did not do him much credit. That was a wicked thing.

COTTAGER.

Have done—no more of this—It is not well to ſtir up old grievances.

WIFE.

Why, you ſaid I might ſpeak ill of the living.

'Tis very hard indeed, if one muſt not ſpeak ill of one's neighbours, dead, nor alive.

COTTAGER.

Who knows whether he was the father of Agatha's child? She never ſaid he was.

WIFE.

Nobody but him—that I am ſure—I would lay a wager—no, no, huſband—you muſt not take his part—it was very wicked! Who knows what is now become of that poor creature? She has not been heard of this many a year. May be ſhe is ſtarving for hunger. Her father might have lived longer too, if that misfortune had not happened.

[Agatha *faints.*]

COTTAGER.

See here! Help! She is fainting—take hold!

WIFE.

Oh, poor woman!

COTTAGER.

Let us take her into the next room.

WIFE.

Oh poor woman!—I am afraid ſhe will not live. Come, chear up, chear up. You are with thoſe who feel for you. [*They lead her off.*]

SCENE II. *An apartment in the Caſtle.*

A table ſpread for breakfaſt—Several ſervants in livery diſpoſing the equipage—BARON WILDENHAIM *enters, attended by a* GENTLEMAN *in waiting.*

BARON.

Has not Count Caſſel left his chamber yet?

GENTLEMAN.

No, my lord, he has but now rung for his valet.

BARON.

BARON.

The whole caſtle ſmells of his perfumery. Go, call my daughter hither. [*Exit* Gentleman.] And am I after all to have an ape for a ſon-in-law? No, I ſhall not be in a hurry—I love my daughter too well. We muſt be better acquainted before I give her to him. I ſhall not ſacrifice my Amelia to the will of others, as I myſelf was ſacrificed. The poor girl might, in thoughtleſſneſs, ſay yes, and afterwards be miſerable. What a pity ſhe is not a boy! The name of Wildenhaim will die with me. My fine eſtates, my good peaſants, all will fall into the hands of ſtrangers. Oh! why was not my Amelia a boy?

Enter AMELIA—[*She kiſſes the* Baron's *hand.*]

AMELIA.

Good morning, dear my lord.

BARON.

Good morning, Amelia. Have you ſlept well?

AMELIA.

Oh! yes, papa. I always ſleep well.

BARON.

Not a little reſtleſs laſt night?

AMELIA.

No.

BARON.

Amelia, you know you have a father who loves you, and I believe you know you have a ſuitor who is come to aſk permiſſion to love you. Tell me candidly how you like Count Caſſel?

AMELIA.

Very well.

BARON.

BARON.

Do not you bluſh when I talk of him?

AMELIA.

No.

BARON.

No—I am ſorry for that. *aſide*] Have you dreamt of him?

AMELIA.

No.

BARON.

Have you not dreamt at all to-night?

AMELIA.

Oh yes — I have dreamt of our chaplain, Mr. Anhalt.

BARON.

Ah ha! As if he ſtood before you and the Count to aſk for the ring.

AMELIA.

No: not that—I dreamt we were all ſtill in France, and he, my tutor, juſt going to take his leave of us for ever — I 'woke with the fright, and found my eyes full of tears.

BARON.

Pſha! I want to know if you can love the Count. You ſaw him at the laſt ball we were at in France: when he capered round you; when he danced minuets; when he——. But I cannot ſay what his converſation was.

AMELIA.

Nor I either — I do not remember a ſyllable of it.

BARON.

No? Then I do not think you like him.

AMELIA.

I believe not.

BARON.

But I think proper to acquaint you he is rich, and

and of great conſequence: rich, and of conſequence; do you hear?

AMELIA.

Yes, dear papa. But my tutor has always told me that birth and fortune are inconſiderable things, and cannot give happineſs.

BARON.

There he is right — But if it happens that birth and fortune are joined with ſenſe and virtue——

AMELIA.

But is it ſo with Count Caſſel?

BARON.

Hem! Hem! *Aſide.*] I will aſk you a few queſtions on this ſubject; but be ſure to anſwer me honeſtly—Speak truth.

AMELIA.

I never told an untruth in my life.

BARON.

Nor ever *conceal* the truth from me, I command you.

AMELIA. [*Earneſtly.*]

Indeed, my lord, I never will.

BARON.

I take you at your word—And now reply to me truly—Do you like to hear the Count ſpoken of?

AMELIA.

Good, or bad?

BARON.

Good. Good.

AMELIA.

Oh yes; I like to hear good of every body.

BARON.

But do not you feel a little fluttered when he is talked of?

AME-

AMELIA.

No. [*ſhaking her head.*]

BARON.

Are not you a little embarraſſed?

AMELIA.

No.

BARON.

Don't you wiſh ſometimes to ſpeak to him, and have not the courage to begin?

AMELIA.

No.

BARON.

Do not you wiſh to take his part when his companions laugh at him?

AMELIA.

No—I love to laugh at him myſelf.

BARON.

Provoking! *Aſide.*] Are not you afraid of him when he comes near you?

AMELIA.

No, not at all.—Oh yes—once. [*recollecting herſelf.*]

BARON.

Ah! Now it comes!

AMELIA.

Once at a ball he trod on my foot; and I was ſo afraid he ſhould tread on me again.

BARON.

You put me out of patience. Hear, Amelia! [*ſtops ſhort, and ſpeaks ſofter.* To ſee you happy is my wiſh. But matrimony, without concord, is like a duetto badly performed; for that reaſon, nature, the great compoſer of all harmony, has ordained, that, when bodies are allied, hearts

hearts ſhould be in perfect uniſon. However, I will ſend Mr. Anhalt to you——

AMELIA [*much pleaſed*].

Do, papa.

BARON.

—He ſhall explain to you my ſentiments. [*Rings.*] A clergyman can do this better than—— [*Enter ſervant.*] Go directly to Mr. Anhalt, tell him that I ſhall be glad to ſee him for a quarter of an hour if he is not engaged. [*Exit ſervant.*

AMELIA [*calls after him*].

Wiſh him a good morning from me.

BARON [*looking at his watch*].

The Count is a tedious time dreſſing. — Have you breakfaſted, Amelia?

AMELIA.

No, papa. [*they ſit down to breakfaſt.*]

BARON.

How is the weather? Have you walked this morning?

AMELIA.

Oh, yes — I was in the garden at five o'clock; it is very fine.

BARON.

Then I'll go out ſhooting. I do not know in what other way to amuſe my gueſt.

Enter Count CASSEL.

COUNT.

Ah, my dear Colonel! Miſs Wildenhaim, I kiſs your hand.

BARON.

Good morning! Good morning! though it is

late in the day, Count. In the country we ſhould riſe earlier.

[Amelia *offers the* Count *a Cup of tea.*]

COUNT.

Is it Hebe herſelf, or Venus, or ——

AMELIA.

Ha, ha, ha! Who can help laughing at his nonſenſe?

BARON [*rather angry*].

Neither Venus, nor Hebe; but Amelia Wildenhaim, if you pleaſe.

COUNT [*Sitting down to breakfaſt*].

You are beautiful, Miſs Wildenhaim.—Upon my honour, I think ſo. I have travelled, and ſeen much of the world, and yet I can poſitively admire you.

AMELIA.

I am ſorry I have not ſeen the world.

COUNT.

Wherefore?

AMELIA.

Becauſe I might then, perhaps, admire you.

COUNT.

True;—for I am an epitome of the world. In my travels I learnt delicacy in Italy—hauteur, in Spain—in France, enterprize—in Ruſſia, prudence—in England, ſincerity—in Scotland, frugality—and in the wilds of America, I learnt love.

AMELIA.

Is there any country where love is taught?

COUNT.

In all barbarous countries. But the whole ſyſtem is exploded in places that are civilized.

AME-

AMELIA.

And what is ſubſtituted in its ſtead?

COUNT.

Intrigue.

AMELIA.

What a poor, uncomfortable ſubſtitute!

COUNT.

There are other things—Song, dance, the opera, and war.

[*Since the entrance of the* Count *the* Baron *has removed to a table at a little diſtance.*

BARON.

What are you talking of there?

COUNT.

Of war, Colonel.

BARON [*riſing*].

Ay, we like to talk on what we don't underſtand.

COUNT [*riſing*].

Therefore, to a lady, I always ſpeak of politics; and to her father, on love.

BARON.

I believe, Count, notwithſtanding your ſneer, I am ſtill as much of a proficient in that art as yourſelf.

COUNT.

I do not doubt it, my dear Colonel, for you are a ſoldier: and ſince the days of Alexander, whoever conquers men is certain to overcome women.

BARON.

An achievement to animate a poltroon.

COUNT.

And, I verily believe, gains more recruits than the king's pay.

BARON.

Now we are on the ſubject of arms, ſhould you

like to go out a ſhooting with me for an hour before dinner?

COUNT.

Bravo, Colonel! A charming thought! This will give me an opportunity to uſe my elegant gun: the but is inlaid with mother-of-pearl. You cannot find better work, or better taſte.—Even my coat of arms is engraved.

BARON.

But can you ſhoot?

COUNT.

That I have never tried—except, with my eyes, at a fine woman.

BARON.

I am not particular what game I purſue.—I have an old gun; it does not look fine; but I can always bring down my bird.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Mr. Anhalt begs leave ——

BARON.

Tell him to come in.—I ſhall be ready in a moment. [*Exit* Servant.

COUNT.

Who is Mr. Anhalt?

AMELIA.

Oh, a very good man. [*With warmth.*]

COUNT.

"A good man." In Italy, that means a religious man; in France, it means a cheerful man; in Spain, it means a wiſe man; and in England, it means a rich man.—Which good man of all theſe is Mr. Anhalt?

AME-

AMELIA.

A good man in every country, except England.

COUNT.

And give me the Engliſh good man, before that of any other nation.

BARON.

And of what nation would you prefer your good woman to be, Count?

COUNT.

Of Germany. [*bowing to* Amelia.]

AMELIA.

In compliment to me?

COUNT.

In juſtice to my own judgment.

BARON.

Certainly. For have we not an inſtance of one German woman, who poſſeſſes every virtue that ornaments the whole ſex; whether as a woman of illuſtrious rank, or in the more exalted character of a wife, and a mother?

Enter Mr. ANHALT.

ANHALT.

I come by your command, Baron ——

BARON.

Quick, Count.—Get your elegant gun.—I paſs your apartments, and will ſoon call for you.

COUNT.

I fly.—Beautiful Amelia, it is a ſacrifice I make to your father, that I leave for a few hours his amiable daughter. [*Exit.*

BARON.

My dear Amelia, I think it ſcarcely neceſſary to ſpeak to Mr. Anhalt, or that he ſhould ſpeak to you, on

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BARON.

My dear Amelia, I think it ſcarcely neceſſary to ſpeak to Mr. Anhalt, or that he ſhould ſpeak to you, on

on the ſubject of the Count; but as he is here, leave us alone.

AMELIA [*as ſhe retires*].

Good morning, Mr. Anhalt.—I hope you are very well. [*Exit.*

BARON.

I'll tell you in a few words why I ſent for you. Count Caſſel is here, and wiſhes to marry my daughter.

ANHALT [*much concerned*].

Really!

BARON.

He is—he—in a word I don't like him.

ANHALT [*with emotion*].

And Miſs Wildenhaim——

BARON.

I ſhall not command, neither perſuade her to the marriage—I know too well the fatal influence of parents on ſuch a ſubject. Objections to be ſure, if they could be removed—But when you find a man's head without brains, and his boſom without a heart, theſe are important articles to ſupply. Young as you are, Anhalt, I know no one ſo able to reſtore, or to beſtow thoſe bleſſings on his fellow-creatures, as you. [Anhalt *bows.*] The Count wants a little of my daughter's ſimplicity and ſenſibility.—Take him under your care while he is here, and make him ſomething like yourſelf.—You have ſucceeded to my wiſh in the education of my daughter.—Form the Count after your own manner.—I ſhall then have what I have ſighed for all my life—a ſon.

ANHALT.

With your permiſſion, Baron, I will aſk one queſtion. What remains to intereſt you in favour of

of a man, whoſe head and heart are good for nothing?

BARON.

Birth and fortune. Yet, if I thought my daughter abſolutely diſliked him, or that ſhe loved another, I would not thwart a firſt affection;—no, for the world, I would not. [*ſighing.*] But that her affections are already beſtowed, is not probable.

ANHALT.

Are you of opinion that ſhe will never fall in love?

BARON.

Oh! no. I am of opinion that no woman ever arrived at the age of twenty without that misfortune.—But this is another ſubject.—Go to Amelia—explain to her the duties of a wife and of a mother.—If ſhe comprehends them, as ſhe ought, then aſk her if ſhe thinks ſhe could fulfil thoſe duties, as the wife of Count Caſſel.

ANHALT.

I will.—But—I—Miſs Wildenhaim—[*confuſed.* I—I ſhall—I—I ſhall obey your commands.

BARON.

Do ſo. [*gives a deep ſigh.* Ah! ſo far this weight is removed; but there lies ſtill a heavier next my heart.—You underſtand me.—How is it, Mr. Anhalt? Have you not yet been able to make any diſcoveries on that unfortunate ſubject?

ANHALT.

I have taken infinite pains; but in vain. No ſuch perſon is to be found.

BARON.

Believe me, this burthen preſſes on my thoughts ſo much, that many nights I go without ſleep. A man is ſometimes tempted to commit ſuch depra-

vity

vity when young.—Oh, Anhalt! had I, in my youth, had you for a tutor;—but I had no inſtructor but my paſſions; no governor but my own will.

[*Exit.*

ANHALT.

This commiſſion of the Baron's in reſpect to his daughter, I am—[*looks about*]—If I ſhou'd meet her now, I cannot—I muſt recover myſelf firſt, and then prepare.—A walk in the fields, and a fervent prayer—After theſe, I truſt, I ſhall return, as a man whoſe views are ſolely placed on a future world; all hopes in this, with fortitude reſigned. [*Exit.*

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE I. *An open Field.*

FREDERICK *alone, with a few pieces of money which he turns about in his hands.*

FREDERICK.

TO return with this trifle for which I have ſtooped to beg! return to ſee my mother dying! I would rather fly to the world's end. [*Looking at the money.*] What can I buy with this? It is hardly enough to pay for the nails that will be wanted for her coffin. My great anxiety will drive me to diſtraction. However, let the conſequence of our affliction be what it may, all will fall upon my father's head; and may he pant for Heaven's forgiveneſs, as my poor mother——[*At a diſtance is heard the firing of a gun, then the cry of Halloo, Halloo — Gamekeepers and Sportſmen run acroſs the ſtage—he looks about.*] Here they come—a nobleman, I ſuppoſe, or a man of fortune. Yes, yes —and I will once more beg for my mother.—May Heaven ſend relief!

Enter the BARON *followed ſlowly by the* COUNT. *The* BARON *ſtops.*

BARON.

Quick, quick, Count! Aye, aye, that was a blunder indeed. Don't you ſee the dogs? There they run— they have loſt the ſcent. *Exit* Baron *looking after the dogs.*

COUNT.

So much the better, Colonel, for I muſt take a little breath. [*He leans on his gun*—Frederick *goes up to him with great modeſty.*]

FREDERICK.

Gentleman, I beg you will beſtow from your ſuperfluous wants ſomething to relieve the pain, and nouriſh the weak frame, of an expiring woman.

The BARON *re-enters.*

COUNT.

What police is here! that a nobleman's amuſements ſhould be interrupted by the attack of vagrants.

FREDERICK [*to the* Baron].

Have pity, noble Sir, and relieve the diſtreſs of an unfortunate ſon, who ſupplicates for his dying mother.

BARON [*taking out his purſe*].

I think, young ſoldier, it would be better if you were with your regiment on duty, inſtead of begging.

FREDERICK.

I would with all my heart: but at this preſent moment my ſorrows are too great.—[Baron *gives ſomething.*] I entreat your pardon. What you have been ſo good as to give me is not enough.

BARON [*ſurpriſed*].

Not enough!

FREDERICK.

No, it is not enough.

COUNT.

The moſt ſingular beggar I ever met in all my travels.

FRE-

FREDERICK.

If you have a charitable heart, give me one dollar.

BARON.

This is the firſt time I was ever dictated by a beggar what to give him.

FREDERICK.

With one dollar you will ſave a diſtracted man.

BARON.

I don't chooſe to give any more. Count, go on.

[*Exit* Count—*as the* Baron *follows*, Frederick *ſeizes him by the breaſt and draws his ſword.*]

FREDERICK.

Your purſe, or your life.

BARON [*calling*].

Here! here! ſeize and ſecure him.

[*Some of the Gamekeepers run on, lay hold of* Frederick, *and diſarm him.*]

FREDERICK.

What have I done!

BARON.

Take him to the caſtle, and confine him in one of the towers. I ſhall follow you immediately.

FREDERICK.

One favour I have to beg, one favour only.—I know that I am guilty, and am ready to receive the puniſhment my crime deſerves. But I have a mother, who is expiring for want—pity her, if you cannot pity me—beſtow on her relief. If you will ſend to yonder hut, you will find that I do not impoſe on you a falſehood. For her it was I drew my ſword—for her I am ready to die.

BARON.

Take him away, and impriſon him where I told you.

FREDERICK [*as he is forced off*].

Woe to that man to whom I owe my birth!

[*Exit.*

BARON [*calls another Keeper*].

Here, Frank, run directly to yonder hamlet, inquire in the firſt, ſecond, and third cottage for a poor ſick woman—and if you really find ſuch a perſon, give her this purſe. [*Exit Gamekeeper.*

BARON.

A moſt extraordinary event!—and what a well-looking youth! ſomething in his countenance and addreſs which ſtruck me inconceivably!—If it is true that he begged for his mother—But if he did——for the attempt upon my life, he muſt die. Vice is never half ſo dangerous, as when it aſſumes the garb of morality. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *A Room in the Caſtle.*

AMELIA [*alone*].

Why am I ſo uneaſy; ſo peeviſh; who has offended me? I did not mean to come into this room. In the garden I intended to go [*going, turns back*]. No, I will not—yes, I will—juſt go, and look if my auriculas are ſtill in bloſſom; and if the apple-tree is grown which Mr. Anhalt planted.—I feel very low-ſpirited—ſomething muſt be the matter.—Why do I cry?—Am I not well?

Enter Mr. ANHALT.

Ah! good morning, my dear Sir—Mr. Anhalt, I meant to ſay—I beg pardon.

ANHALT.

Never mind, Miſs Wildenhaim—I don't diſlike to hear you call me as you did.

AME-

AMELIA.

In earneſt?

ANHALT.

Really. You have been crying. May I know the reaſon? The loſs of your mother, ſtill?—

AMELIA.

No—I have left off crying for her.

ANHALT.

I beg pardon if I have come at an improper hour; but I wait upon you by the commands of your father.

AMELIA.

You are welcome at all hours. My father has more than once told me that he who forms my mind I ſhould always conſider as my greateſt benefactor. [*looking down*] And my heart tells me the ſame.

ANHALT.

I think myſelf amply rewarded by the good opinion you have of me.

AMELIA.

When I remember what trouble I have ſometimes given you, I cannot be too grateful.

ANHALT [*to himſelf*].

Oh! Heavens!—[*to* Amelia]. I—I come from your father with a commiſſion.—If you pleaſe, we will ſit down. [*He places chairs, and they ſit.*] Count Caſſel is arrived.

AMELIA.

Yes, I know.

ANHALT.

And do you know for what reaſon?

AMELIA.

He wiſhes to marry me.

AN-

ANHALT.

Does he? *haſtily*] But believe me, the Baron will not perſuade you—No, I am ſure he will not.

AMELIA.

I know that.

ANHALT.

He wiſhes that I ſhould aſcertain whether you have an inclination——

AMELIA.

For the Count, or for matrimony do you mean?

ANHALT.

For matrimony.

AMELIA.

All things that I don't know, and don't underſtand, are quite indifferent to me.

ANHALT.

For that very reaſon I am ſent to you to explain the good and the bad of which matrimony is compoſed.

AMELIA.

Then I beg firſt to be acquainted with the good.

ANHALT.

When two ſympathetic hearts meet in the marriage ſtate, matrimony may be called a happy life. When ſuch a wedded pair find thorns in their path, each will be eager, for the ſake of the other, to tear them from the root. Where they have to mount hills, or wind a labyrinth, the moſt experienced will lead the way, and be a guide to his companion. Patience and love will accompany them in their journey, while melancholy and diſcord they leave far behind.—Hand in hand they paſs on from morning till evening, through their ſummer's day, till the night of age draws on, and the ſleep of death over-

overtakes the one. The other, weeping and mourning, yet looks forward to the bright region where he ſhall meet his ſtill ſurviving partner, among trees and flowers which themſelves have planted, in fields of eternal verdure.

AMELIA.

You may tell my father—I'll marry. [*Riſes.*]

ANHALT [*riſing*].

This picture is pleaſing; but I muſt beg you not to forget that there is another on the ſame ſubject.—When convenience, and fair appearance joined to folly and ill-humour, forge the fetters of matrimony, they gall with their weight the married pair. Diſcontented with each other—at variance in opinions—their mutual averſion increaſes with the years they live together. They contend moſt, where they ſhould moſt unite; torment, where they ſhould moſt ſoothe. In this rugged way, choaked with the weeds of ſuſpicion, jealouſy, anger, and hatred, they take their daily journey, till one of theſe *alſo* ſleep in death. The other then lifts up his dejected head, and calls out in acclamations of joy—Oh, liberty! dear liberty!

AMELIA.

I will not marry.

ANHALT.

You mean to ſay, you will not fall in love.

AMELIA.

Oh no! [*aſhamed*] I am in love.

ANHALT.

Are in love! [*ſtarting*] And with the Count?

AMELIA.

I wiſh I was.

ANHALT.

Why ſo?

AME-

AMELIA.

Becauſe *he* would, perhaps, love me again.

ANHALT [*warmly*].

Who is there that would not?

AMELIA.

Would you?

ANHALT.

I—I—me—I—I am out of the queſtion.

AMELIA.

No; you are the very perſon to whom I have put the queſtion.

ANHALT.

What do you mean?

AMELIA.

I am glad you don't underſtand me. I was afraid I had ſpoken too plain. [*in confuſion*].

ANHALT.

Underſtand you!—As to that—I am not dull.

AMELIA.

I know you are not — And as you have for a long time inſtructed me, why ſhould not I now begin to teach you?

ANHALT.

Teach me what?

AMELIA.

Whatever I know, and you don't.

ANHALT.

There are ſome things I had rather never know.

AMELIA.

So you may remember I ſaid when you began to teach me mathematics. I ſaid I had rather not know it — But now I have learnt it gives me a great deal of pleaſure — and [*heſitating*] perhaps, who

who can tell, but that I might teach ſomething as pleaſant to you, as reſolving a problem is to me.

ANHALT.

Woman herſelf is a problem.

AMELIA.

And I'll teach you to make her out.

ANHALT.

You teach?

AMELIA.

Why not? none but a woman can teach the ſcience of herſelf: and though I own I am very young, a young woman may be as agreeable for a tutoreſs as an old one.—I am ſure I always learnt faſter from you than from the old clergyman who taught me before you came.

ANHALT.

This is nothing to the ſubject.

AMELIA.

What is the ſubject?

ANHALT.

——— Love.

AMELIA [*going up to him*].

Come, then, teach it me—teach it me as you taught me geography, languages, and other important things.

ANHALT [*turning from her*].

Pſhaw!

AMELIA.

Ah! you won't—You know you have already taught me that, and you won't begin again.

ANHALT.

You miſconſtrue—you miſconceive every thing I ſay or do. The ſubject I came to you upon was marriage.

AMELIA.

A very proper ſubject from the man who has taught me love, and I accept the propoſal. [*curtſying.*]

ANHALT.

Again you miſconceive and confound me.

AMELIA.

Ay, I ſee how it is—You have no inclination to experience with me "the good part of matrimony:" I am not the female with whom you would like to go "hand in hand up hills, and through labyrinths"—with whom you would like to "root up thorns; and with whom you would delight to plant lilies and roſes." No, you had rather call out, "Oh liberty, dear liberty."

ANHALT.

Why do you force from me, what it is villainous to own?—I love you more than life—Oh, Amelia! had we lived in thoſe golden times, which the poets picture, no one but you——But as the world is changed, your birth and fortune make our union impoſſible—To preſerve the character, and more the feelings of an honeſt man, I would not marry you without the conſent of your father—And could I, dare I propoſe it to him.

AMELIA.

He has commanded me never to conceal or diſguiſe the truth. I will propoſe it to him. The ſubject of the Count will force me to ſpeak plainly, and this will be the moſt proper time, while he can compare the merit of you both.

ANHALT.

I conjure you not to think of expoſing yourſelf and me to his reſentment.

AMELIA.

It is my father's will that I ſhould marry—It is my

my father's wiſh to ſee me happy — If then you love me as you ſay, I will marry; and will be happy—but only with you.—I will tell him this.—At firſt he will ſtart; then grow angry; then be in a paſſion — In his paſſion he will call me "undutiful:" but he will ſoon recollect himſelf, and reſume his uſual ſmiles, ſaying "Well, well, if he love you, and you love him, in the name of heaven, let it be."—Then I ſhall hug him round the neck, kiſs his hands, run away from him, and fly to you; it will ſoon be known that I am your bride, the whole village will come to wiſh me joy, and heaven's bleſſing will follow.

Enter Verdun, the BUTLER.

AMELIA [*diſcontented*].

Ah! is it you?

BUTLER.

Without vanity; I have taken the liberty to enter this apartment the moment the good news reached my ears.

AMELIA.

What news?

BUTLER.

Pardon an old ſervant, your father's old butler, gracious lady, who has had the honour to carry the baron in his arms—and afterwards with humble ſubmiſſion to receive many a box o' the ear from you—if he thinks it his duty to make his congratulations with due reverence on this happy day, and to join with the muſes in harmonious tunes on the lyre.

AMELIA.

Oh! my good butler, I am not in a humour to liſten to the muſes, and your lyre.

BUTLER.

There has never been a birth-day, nor wedding-day, nor chriſtening-day, celebrated in your family, in which I have not joined with the muſes in full chorus. —In forty-ſix years, three hundred and ninety-ſeven congratulations on different occaſions have dropped from my pen. To-day, the three hundred and ninety-eighth is coming forth;—for heaven has protected our noble maſter, who has been in great danger.

AMELIA.

Danger! My father in danger! What do you mean?

BUTLER.

One of the gamekeepers has returned to inform the whole caſtle of a baſe and knaviſh trick, of which the world will talk, and my poetry hand down to poſterity.

AMELIA.

What, what is all this?

BUTLER.

The baron, my lord and maſter, in company with the ſtrange Count, had not been gone a mile beyond the lawn, when one of them——

AMELIA.

What happened? Speak for heaven's ſake.

BUTLER.

My verſe ſhall tell you.

AMELIA.

No, no; tell us in proſe.

ANHALT.

Yes, in proſe.

BUTLER.

Ah, you have neither of you ever been in love, or you would prefer poetry to proſe. But excuſe

[*pulls*

[*pulls out a paper*] the haſte in which it was written. I heard the news in the fields—always have paper and a pencil about me, and compoſed the whole forty lines croſſing the meadows and the park in my way home. [*reads.*]

Oh Muſe, aſcend the forked mount,
And lofty ſtrains prepare,
About a Baron and a Count,
Who went to hunt the hare.

The hare ſhe ran with utmoſt ſpeed,
And ſad, and anxious looks,
Becauſe the furious hounds indeed,
Were near to her, gadzooks.

At length, the Count and Baron bold
Their footſteps homeward bended;
For why, becauſe, as you were told,
The hunting it was ended.

Before them ſtrait a youth appears,
Who made a piteous pother,
And told a tale with many tears,
About his dying mother.

The youth was in ſevere diſtreſs,
And ſeem'd as he had ſpent all,
He look'd a ſoldier by his dreſs;
For that was regimental.

The Baron's heart was full of ruth,
While from his eye fell brine o!
And ſoon he gave the mournful youth
A little ready rino.

He gave a ſhilling as I live,
Which, ſure, was mighty well;

But

But to ſome people if you give
An inch—they'll take an ell.

The youth then drew his martial knife,
And ſeiz'd the Baron's collar,
He ſwore he'd have the Baron's life,
Or elſe another dollar.

Then did the Baron in a fume,
Soon raiſe a mighty din,
Whereon came butler, huntſman, groom,
And eke the whipper-in.

Maugre this young man's warlike coat,
They bore him off to priſon;
And held ſo ſtrongly by his throat,
They almoſt ſtopt his whizzen.

Soon may a neckcloth, call'd a rope,
Of robbing cure this elf;
If ſo I'll write, without a trope,
His dying ſpeech myſelf.

And had the Baron chanc'd to die,
Oh! grief to all the nation,
I muſt have made an elegy,
And not this fine narration.

MORAL.

Henceforth let thoſe who all have ſpent,
And would by begging live,
Take warning here, and be content,
With what folks chuſe to give.

AMELIA.

Your muſe, Mr. Butler, is in a very inventive humour this morning.

ANHALT.

ANHALT.

And your tale too improbable, even for fiction.

BUTLER.

Improbable! It's a real fact.

AMELIA.

What, a robber in our grounds at noon-day? Very likely indeed!

BUTLER.

I don't ſay it was likely — I only ſay it is true.

ANHALT.

No, no, Mr. Verdun, we find no fault with your poetry; but don't attempt to impoſe it upon us for truth.

AMELIA.

Poets are allowed to ſpeak falſehood, and we forgive yours.

BUTLER.

I won't be forgiven, for I ſpeak truth—And here the robber comes, in cuſtody, to prove my words. [*Goes off, repeating*] "I'll write his dying ſpeech myſelf."

AMELIA.

Look! as I live, ſo he does — They come nearer; he's a young man, and has ſomething intereſting in his figure. An honeſt countenance, with grief and ſorrow in his face. No, he is no robber—I pity him! Oh! look how the keepers drag him unmercifully into the tower—Now they lock it—Oh! how that poor, unfortunate man muſt feel!

ANHALT [*aſide*].

Hardly worſe than I do.

Enter the BARON.

AMELIA [*runs up to him*].

A thouſand congratulations, my dear papa.

BARON.

BARON.

For Heaven's ſake ſpare your congratulations. The old Butler, in coming up ſtairs, has already overwhelmed me with them.

ANHALT.

Then, it is true, my Lord? I could hardly believe the old man.

AMELIA.

And the young priſoner, with all his honeſt looks, is a robber?

BARON.

He is; but I verily believe for the firſt and laſt time. A moſt extraordinary event, Mr. Anhalt. This young man begged; then drew his ſword upon me; but he trembled ſo, when he ſeized me by the breaſt, a child might have overpowered him. I almoſt wiſh he had made his eſcape—this adventure may coſt him his life, and I might have preſerved it with one dollar: but, now, to ſave him would ſet a bad example.

AMELIA.

Oh no! my lord, have pity on him! Plead for him, Mr. Anhalt!

BARON.

Amelia, have you had any converſation with Mr. Anhalt?

AMELIA.

Yes, my Lord.

BARON.

Reſpecting matrimony?

AMELIA.

Yes; and I have told him——

ANHALT [*very haſtily*].

According to your commands, Baron——

AME-

AMELIA.

But he has conjured me——

ANHALT.

I have endeavoured, my Lord, to find out——

AMELIA.

Yet, I am ſure, dear papa, your affection for me——

ANHALT.

You wiſh to ſay ſomething to me in your cloſet, my Lord?

BARON.

What the devil is all this converſation? You will not let one another ſpeak—I don't underſtand either of you.

AMELIA.

Dear father, have you not promiſed you will not thwart my affections when I marry, but ſuffer me to follow their dictates.

BARON.

Certainly.

AMELIA.

Do you hear, Mr. Anhalt?

ANHALT.

I beg pardon—I have a perſon who is waiting for me—I am obliged to retire. [*Exit in confuſion.*

BARON [*calls after him*].

I ſhall expect you in my cloſet. I am going there immediately. [*Retiring towards the oppoſite door.*]

AMELIA.

Pray, my Lord, ſtop a few minutes longer: I have ſomething of great importance to ſay to you.

BARON.

Something of importance! to plead for the young man, I ſuppoſe! But that's a ſubject I muſt not liſten to. [*Exit.*

AMELIA.

I wiſh to plead for two young men — For one, that he may be let out of priſon: for the other, that he may be made a priſoner for life. [*Looks out.*] The tower is ſtill locked. How diſmal it muſt be to be ſhut up in ſuch a place; and perhaps—[*Calls*] Butler! Butler! Come this way. I wiſh to ſpeak to you. This young ſoldier has riſked his life for his mother, and that accounts for the intereſt I take in his misfortunes.

Enter the BUTLER.

Pray, have you carried any thing to the priſoner to eat?

BUTLER.

Yes.

AMELIA.

What was it?

BUTLER.

Some fine black bread; and water as clear as cryſtal.

AMELIA.

Are you not aſhamed! Even my father pities him. Go directly down to the kitchen, and deſire the cook to give you ſomething good and comfortable; and then go into the cellar for a bottle of wine.

BUTLER.

Good and comfortable indeed!

AMELIA.

And carry both to the tower.

BUTLER.

I am willing at any time, dear Lady, to obey your orders; but, on this occaſion, the priſoner's food muſt remain bread and water — It is the Baron's particular command.

AME-

AMELIA.

Ah! My father was in the height of paſſion when he gave it.

BUTLER.

Whatſoever his paſſion might be, it is the duty of a true and honeſt dependent to obey his Lord's mandates. I will not ſuffer a ſervant in this houſe, nor will I, myſelf, give the young man any thing except bread and water—But I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll read my verſes to him.

AMELIA.

Give me the key of the cellar—I'll go myſelf.

BUTLER [*gives the key*].

And there's my verſes—[*taking them from his pocket*] Carry them with you, they may comfort him as much as the wine. [*She throws them down. Exit* Amelia.

BUTLER [*in amazement*].

Not take them! Refuſe to take them—[*he lifts them from the floor with the utmoſt reſpect*]—

" I muſt have made an elegy,
And not this fine narration." [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *A Priſon in one of the Towers of the Caſtle.*

FREDERICK [*alone*].

FREDERICK.

HOW a few moments deſtroy the happineſs of man! When I, this morning, ſet out from my inn, and ſaw the ſun riſe, I ſung with joy.—Flattered with the hope of ſeeing my mother, I formed a ſcheme how I would with joy ſurprize her. But, farewell all pleaſant proſpects—I return to my native country, and the firſt object I behold, is my dying parent; my firſt lodging, a priſon; and my next walk will perhaps be—oh, merciful providence! have I deſerved all this?

Enter Amelia *with a ſmall baſket covered with a napkin.—She ſpeaks to ſome one without.*

AMELIA.

Wait there, Francis, I ſhall ſoon be back.

FREDERICK [*hearing the door open, and turning round*].

Who's there?

AMELIA.

You muſt be both hungry and thirſty, I fear.

FREDERICK.

Oh, no! neither.

AMELIA.

Here is a bottle of wine, and ſomething to eat. [*Places the baſket on the table*]. I have often heard

heard my father ſay, that wine is quite a cordial to the heart.

FREDERICK.

A thouſand thanks, dear ſtranger. Ah! could I prevail on you to have it ſent to my mother, who is upon her death-bed, under the roof of an honeſt peaſant, called Hubert! Take it hence, my kind benefactreſs, and ſave my mother.

AMELIA.

But firſt aſſure me that you did not intend to murder my father.

FREDERICK.

Your father! heaven forbid.—I meant but to preſerve her life, who gave me mine.—Murder your father! No, no—I hope not.

AMELIA.

And I thought not—Or, if you had murdered any one, you had better have killed the Count; nobody would have miſſed him.

FREDERICK.

Who, may I enquire, were thoſe gentlemen, whom I hoped to frighten into charity?

AMELIA.

Ay, if you only intended to frighten them, the Count was the very perſon for your purpoſe. But you caught hold of the other gentleman.—And could you hope to intimidate Baron Wildenhaim?

FREDERICK.

Baron Wildenhaim!—Almighty powers!

AMELIA.

What's the matter?

FRE-

FREDERICK.

The man to whoſe breaſt I held my ſword—[*trembling*].

AMELIA.

Was Baron Wildenhaim—the owner of this eſtate—my father!

FREDERICK [*with the greateſt emotion*].

My father!

AMELIA.

Good heaven, how he looks! I am afraid he's mad. Here! Francis, Francis. [*Exit, calling.*

FREDERICK [*all agitation*].

My *father*! Eternal judge! thou do'ſt not ſlumber! The man, againſt whom I drew my ſword this day was my father! One moment longer, and provoked, I might have been the murderer of my father! my hair ſtands on end! my eyes are clouded! I cannot ſee any thing before me. [*Sinks down on a chair*]. If Providence had ordained that I ſhould give the fatal blow, who, would have been moſt in fault?—I dare not pronounce——[*after a pauſe*] That benevolent young female who left me juſt now, is, then, my ſiſter—and I ſuppoſe that fop, who accompanied my father ——

Enter Mr. ANHALT.

Welcome, Sir! By your dreſs you are of the church, and conſequently a meſſenger of comfort. You are moſt welcome, Sir.

ANHALT.

I wiſh to bring comfort and avoid upbraidings; for your own conſcience will reproach you more than the voice of a preacher. From the ſenſibility of your countenance, together with a language, and addreſs ſuperior to the vulgar, it appears,

pears, young man, you have had an education, which ſhould have preſerved you from a ſtate like this.

FREDERICK.

My education I owe to my mother. Filial love, in return, has plunged me into the ſtate you ſee. A civil magiſtrate will condemn according to the law—A prieſt, in judgment, is not to conſider the act itſelf, but the impulſe which led to the act.

ANHALT.

I ſhall judge with all the lenity my religion dictates: and you are the priſoner of a nobleman, who compaſſionates you for the affection which you bear towards your mother; for he has ſent to the village where you directed him, and has found the account you gave relating to her true. —With this impreſſion in your favour, it is my advice, that you endeavour to ſee and ſupplicate the Baron for your releaſe from priſon, and all the peril of his juſtice.

FREDERICK [*ſtarting*].

I—I ſee the Baron! I!—I ſupplicate for my deliverance.—Will you favour me with his name? —Is it not Baron ——

ANHALT.

Baron Wildenhaim.

FREDERICK.

Baron Wildenhaim! He lived formerly in Alſace.

ANHALT.

The ſame.—About a year after the death of his wife, he left Alſace; and arrived here a few weeks ago to take poſſeſſion of this his paternal eſtate.

FRE-

FREDERICK.

So! his wife is dead;—and that generous young lady who came to my priſon juſt now is his daughter?

ANHALT.

Miſs Wildenhaim, his daughter.

FREDERICK.

And that young gentleman, I ſaw with him this morning, is his ſon?

ANHALT.

He has no ſon.

FREDERICK [*haſtily*].

Oh, yes, he has—[*recollecting himſelf*]—I mean him that was out ſhooting to-day.

ANHALT.

He is not his ſon.

FREDERICK [*to himſelf*].

Thank Heaven!

ANHALT.

He is only a viſitor.

FREDERICK.

I thank you for this information; and if you will undertake to procure me a private interview with Baron Wildenhaim ——

ANHALT.

Why private? However, I will venture to take you for a ſhort time from this place, and introduce you; depending on your innocence, or your repentance—on his conviction in your favour, or his mercy towards your guilt. Follow me. [*Exit.*

FREDERICK [*following*].

I have beheld an affectionate parent in deep adverſity.—Why ſhould I tremble thus?—Why doubt

doubt my fortitude, in the preſence of an unnatural parent in proſperity? [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *A Room in the Caſtle.*

Enter BARON WILDENHAIM *and* AMELIA.

BARON.

I hope you judge more favourably of Count Caſſel's underſtanding ſince the private interview you have had with him. Confeſs to me the exact effect of the long conference between you.

AMELIA.

To make me hate him.

BARON.

What has he done?

AMELIA.

Oh! told me of ſuch barbarous deeds he has committed.

BARON.

What deeds?

AMELIA.

Made vows of love to ſo many women, that, on his marriage with me, a hundred female hearts will at leaſt be broken.

BARON.

Pſha! do you believe him?

AMELIA.

Suppoſe I do not; is it to his honour that I believe he tells a falſehood?

BARON.

He is miſtaken merely.

AMELIA.

Indeed, my Lord, in one reſpect I am ſure he

ſpeaks truth. For our old Butler told my waiting-maid of a poor young creature who has been deceived, undone; and ſhe, and her whole family, involved in ſhame and ſorrow by his perfidy.

BARON.

Are you ſure the Butler ſaid this?

AMELIA.

See him, and aſk him. He knows the whole ſtory, indeed he does; the names of the perſons, and every circumſtance.

BARON.

Deſire he may be ſent to me.

AMELIA [*goes to the door and calls*].

Order old Verdun to come to the Baron directly.

BARON.

I know tale-bearers are apt to be erroneous. I'll hear from himſelf, the account you ſpeak of.

AMELIA.

I believe it is in verſe.

BARON.

[*angry*]. In verſe!

AMELIA.

But, then, indeed it's true.

Enter BUTLER.

AMELIA.

Verdun, pray have not you ſome true poetry?

BUTLER.

All my poetry is true—and ſo far, better than ſome people's proſe.

BARON.

But I want proſe on this occaſion, and command you to give me nothing elſe. [Butler *bows.*] Have you heard of an engagement which Count Caſſel

Caſſel is under to any other woman than my daughter?

BUTLER.

I am to tell your honour in proſe?

BARON.

Certainly. [Butler *appears uneaſy and loath to ſpeak.*] Amelia, he does not like to divulge what he knows in preſence of a third perſon—leave the room. [*Exit* Amelia.

BUTLER.

No, no—that did not cauſe my reluctance to ſpeak.

BARON.

What then?

BUTLER.

Your not allowing me to ſpeak in verſe—for here is the poetic poem. [*Holding up a paper.*]

BARON.

How dare you preſume to contend with my will? Tell in plain language all you know on the ſubject I have named.

BUTLER.

Well then, my Lord, if you muſt have the account in quiet proſe, thus it was — Phœbus, one morning, roſe in the Eaſt, and having handed in the long-expected day, he called up his brother Hymen ——

BARON.

Have done with your rhapſody.

BUTLER.

Ay; I knew you'd like it beſt in verſe—

There lived a lady in this land,
Whoſe charms the heart made tingle;
At church ſhe had not given her hand,
And therefore ſtill was ſingle.

BARON.

Keep to proſe.

BUTLER.

I will, my Lord; but I have repeated it ſo often in verſe, I ſcarce know how. — Count Caſſel, influenced by the deſigns of Cupid in his very worſt humour,

" Count Caſſel wooed this maid ſo rare,
And in her eye found grace;
And if his purpoſe was not fair,"

BARON.

No verſe.

BUTLER.

" It probably was baſe."

I beg your pardon, my Lord; but the verſe will intrude in ſpite of my efforts to forget it. 'Tis as difficult for me at times to forget, as 'tis for other men at times to remember. But in plain truth, my Lord, the Count was treacherous, cruel, forſworn.

BARON.

I am aſtoniſhed!

BUTLER.

And would be more ſo if you would liſten to the whole poem. [*Moſt earneſtly.*] Pray, my Lord, liſten to it.

BARON.

You know the family? All the parties?

BUTLER.

I will bring the father of the damſel to prove the veracity of my muſe. His name is Baden—poor old man!

" The

" The ſire conſents to bleſs the pair,
And names the nuptial day,
When, lo! the bridegroom was not there,
Becauſe he was away."

BARON.

But tell me—Had the father his daughter's innocence to deplore?

BUTLER.

Ah! my Lord, ah! and you *muſt* hear that part in rhyme. Loſs of innocence never ſounds well except in verſe.

" For ah! the very night before,
No prudent guard upon her,
The Count he gave her oaths a ſcore,
And took in change her honour.

MORAL.

Then you, who now lead ſingle lives,
From this ſad tale beware;
And do not act as you were wives,
Before you really are."

Enter COUNT CASSEL.

BARON [*to the* Butler].

Leave the room inſtantly.

COUNT.

Yes, good Mr. family poet, leave the room, and take your doggerels with you.

BUTLER.

Don't affront my poem, your honour; for I am indebted to you for the plot.

" The Count he gave her oaths a ſcore
And took in change her honour."

Ex it Butler.

BARON.

BARON.

Count, you ſee me agitated.

COUNT.

What can be the cauſe?

BARON.

I'll not keep you in doubt a moment. You are accuſed, young man, of being engaged to another woman while you offer marriage to my child.

COUNT.

To only *one* other woman?

BARON.

What do you mean?

COUNT.

My meaning is, that when a man is young and rich, has travelled, and is no perſonal object of diſapprobation, to have made vows but to one woman, is an abſolute ſlight upon the reſt of the ſex.

BARON.

Without evaſion, Sir, do you know the name of Baden? Was there ever a promiſe of marriage made by you to his daughter? Anſwer me plainly: or muſt I take a journey to inquire of the father?

COUNT.

No—he can tell you no more than, I dare ſay, you already know; and which I ſhall not contradict.

BARON.

Amazing inſenſibility! And can you hold your head erect while you acknowledge perfidy?

COUNT.

My dear baron,—if every man, who deſerves

to

to have a charge ſuch as this brought againſt him, was not permitted to look up—it is a doubt whom we might not meet crawling on all fours. [*he accidentally taps the Baron's ſhoulder.*]

BARON [*ſtarts — recollects himſelf—then in a faultering voice*].
Yet—nevertheleſs—the act is ſo atrocious—

COUNT.
But nothing new.

BARON [*faintly*].
Yes—I hope—I hope it is new.

COUNT.
What, did you never meet with ſuch a thing before?

BARON [*agitated*].
If I have—I pronounced the man who ſo offended—a villain.

COUNT.
You are ſingularly ſcrupulous. I queſtion if the man thought himſelf ſo.

BARON.
Yes he did.

COUNT.
How do you know?

BARON [*heſitating*].
I have heard him ſay ſo.

COUNT.
But he ate, drank, and ſlept, I ſuppoſe?

BARON [*confuſed*].
Perhaps he did.

COUNT.

COUNT.

And was merry with his friends; and his friends as fond of him as ever?

BARON.

Perhaps [*confuſed*] — perhaps they were.

COUNT.

And perhaps he now and then took upon him to lecture young men for their gallantries?

BARON.

Perhaps he did.

COUNT.

Why, then, after all, Baron, your villain is a mighty good, prudent, honeſt fellow; and I have no objection to your giving me that name.

BARON.

But do you not think of ſome atonement to the unfortunate girl?

COUNT.

Did *your* villain atone?

BARON.

No: when his reaſon was matured, he wiſhed to make ſome recompenſe; but his endeavours were too late.

COUNT.

I will follow his example, and wait till my reaſon is matured, before I think myſelf competent to determine what to do.

BARON.

And 'till that time I defer your marriage with my daughter.

COUNT.

Would you delay her happineſs ſo long? Why, my dear Baron, conſidering the faſhionable

able life I lead, it may be theſe ten years before my judgment arrives to its neceſſary ſtandard.

BARON.

I have the head-ach, Count — Theſe tidings have diſcompoſed, diſordered me — I beg your abſence for a few minutes.

COUNT.

I obey—And let me aſſure you, my Lord, that, although, from the extreme delicacy of your honour, you have ever through life ſhuddered at ſeduction ; yet, there are conſtitutions, and there are circumſtances, in which it can be palliated.

BARON.

Never. [*violently.*]

COUNT.

Not in a grave, ſerious, reflecting man ſuch as *you*, I grant. But in a gay, lively, inconſiderate, flimſy, frivolous coxcomb, ſuch as myſelf, it is excuſable: for me to keep my word to a woman, would be deceit: 'tis not expected of me. It is in my character to break oaths in love ; as it is in your nature, my Lord, never to have ſpoken any thing but wiſdom and truth. [*Exit.*

BARON.

Could I have thought a creature ſo inſignificant as that, had power to excite ſenſations ſuch as I feel at preſent! I am, indeed, worſe than he is, as much as the crimes of a man exceed thoſe of an idiot.

Enter AMELIA.

AMELIA.

I heard the Count leave you, my Lord, and ſo I am come to enquire——

BARON [*ſitting down, and trying to compoſe himſelf*].

You are not to marry count Caſſel — And now, mention his name to me no more.

AMELIA.

I won't — indeed I won't — for I hate his name.— But thank you, my dear father, for this good news [*draws a chair, and ſits on the oppoſite ſide of the table on which he leans.— After a pauſe*] And who am I to marry?

BARON [*his head on his hand*].

I can't tell.

[Amelia *appears to have ſomething on her mind which ſhe wiſhes to diſcloſe*].

AMELIA.

I never liked the Count.

BARON.

No more did I.

AMELIA [*after a pauſe*].

I think love comes juſt as it pleaſes, without being aſked.

BARON.

It does ſo. [*in deep thought*].

AMELIA [*after another pauſe*].

And there are inſtances where, perhaps, the object of love makes the paſſion meritorious.

BARON.

To be ſure there are.

AMELIA.

For example; my affection for Mr. Anhalt as my tutor.

BARON.

Right.

AME-

AMELIA [*after another pauſe*].

I ſhould like to marry. [*ſighing.*]

BARON.

So you ſhall. [*a pauſe*] It is proper for every body to marry.

AMELIA.

Why, then, does not Mr. Anhalt marry?

BARON.

You muſt aſk him that queſtion yourſelf.

AMELIA.

I have.

BARON.

And what did he ſay?

AMELIA.

Will you give me leave to tell you what he ſaid?

BARON.

Certainly.

AMELIA.

And what I ſaid to him?

BARON.

Certainly.

AMELIA.

And won't you be angry?

BARON.

Undoubtedly not.

AMELIA.

Why, then—you know you commanded me never to diſguiſe or conceal the truth.

BARON.

I did ſo.

AMELIA.

Why, then he ſaid ——

BARON.

What did he ſay?

AMELIA.

He ſaid—he would not marry me without your conſent for the world.

BARON [*ſtarting from his chair*].

And pray, how came this the ſubject of your converſation?

AMELIA [*riſing*].

I brought it up.

BARON.

And what did you ſay?

AMELIA.

I ſaid that birth and fortune were ſuch old-faſhioned things to me, I cared nothing about either: and that I had once heard my father declare, he ſhould conſult my happineſs in marrying me, beyond any other conſideration.

BARON.

I will once more repeat to you my ſentiments. It is the cuſtom in this country for the children of nobility to marry only with their equals; but as my daughter's content is more dear to me than an ancient cuſtom, I would beſtow you on the firſt man I thought calculated to make you happy: by this I do not mean to ſay that I ſhould not be ſeverely nice in the character of the man to whom I gave you; and Mr. Anhalt, from his obligations to me, and his high ſenſe of honour, thinks too nobly—

AMELIA.

Would it not be noble to make the daughter of his benefactor happy?

BARON.

But when that daughter is a child, and thinks like a child——

AME-

AMELIA.

No, indeed, papa, I begin to think very like a woman. Aſk *him* if I don't.

BARON.

Aſk him! You feel gratitude for the inſtructions you have received from him, and you fancy it love.

AMELIA.

Are there two gratitudes?

BARON.

What do you mean?

AMELIA.

Becauſe I feel gratitude to you; but that is very unlike the gratitude I feel towards him.

BARON.

Indeed!

AMELIA.

Yes; and then he feels another gratitude towards me. What's that?

BARON.

Has he told you ſo?

AMELIA.

Yes.

BARON.

That was not right of him.

AMELIA.

Oh! if you did but know how I ſurprized him!

BARON.

Surprized him?

AMELIA.

He came to me by your command, to examine my heart reſpecting Count Caſſel. I told him that I would never marry the Count.

BARON.

BARON.

But him?

AMELIA.

Yes, him.

BARON.

Very fine indeed! And what was his anſwer?

AMELIA.

He talked of my rank in life; of my aunts and couſins; of my grandfather, and great-grandfather; of his duty to you; and endeavoured to perſuade me to think no more of him.

BARON.

He acted honeſtly.

AMELIA.

But not politely.

BARON.

No matter.

AMELIA.

Dear father! I ſhall never be able to love another — Never be happy with any one elſe. [*Throwing herſelf on her knees*].

BARON.

Riſe, I command you.

[*As ſhe riſes, enter* ANHALT].

ANHALT.

My Lord, forgive me! I have ventured, on the privilege of my office, as a miniſter of holy charity, to bring the poor ſoldier, whom your juſtice has arreſted, into the adjoining room; and I preſume to entreat you will admit him to your preſence, and hear his apology, or his ſupplication.

BARON.

Anhalt, you have done wrong. I pity the unhappy

unhappy boy; but you know I cannot, muſt not forgive him.

ANHALT.

I beſeech you then, my Lord, to tell him ſo yourſelf. From your lips he may receive his doom with reſignation.

AMELIA.

Oh father! See him and take pity on him; his ſorrows have made him frantic.

BARON.

Leave the room, Amelia. [*on her attempting to ſpeak, he raiſes his voice.*] Inſtantly.—[*Exit* Amelia.

ANHALT.

He aſked a private audience: perhaps he has ſome confeſſion to make that may relieve his mind, and may be requiſite for you to hear.

BARON.

Well, bring him in, and do you wait in the adjoining room, till our conference is over. I muſt then, Sir, have a conference with you.

ANHALT.

I ſhall obey your commands. [*He goes to the door, and re-enters with* Frederick. Anhalt *then retires at the ſame door.*]

BARON [*haughtily to* Frederick].

I know, young man, you plead your mother's wants in excuſe for an act of deſperation: but powerful as this plea might be in palliation of a fault, it cannot extenuate a crime like yours.

FREDERICK.

I have a plea for my conduct even more powerful than a mother's wants.

BARON.

What's that?

FRE-

FREDERICK.

My father's cruelty.

BARON.

You have a father then?

FREDERICK.

I have, and a rich one—Nay, one that's reputed virtuous, and honourable. A great man, poſſeſſing eſtates and patronage in abundance; much eſteemed at court, and beloved by his tenants; kind, benevolent, honeſt, generous—

BARON.

And with all thoſe great qualities, abandons you?

FREDERICK.

He does, with all the qualities I mention.

BARON.

Your father may do right; a diſſipated, deſperate youth, whom kindneſs cannot draw from vicious habits, ſeverity may.

FREDERICK.

You are miſtaken—My father does not diſcard me for my vices—He does not know me—has never ſeen me—He abandoned me, even before I was born.

BARON.

What do you ſay?

FREDERICK.

The tears of my mother are all that I inherit from my father. Never has he protected or ſupported me—never protected her.

BARON.

Why don't you apply to his relations?

FREDERICK.

They diſown me, too—I am, they ſay, related to

to no one—All the world diſclaim me, except my mother—and there again, I have to thank my father.

BARON.

How ſo?

FREDERICK.

Becauſe I am an illegitimate ſon.—My ſeduced mother has brought me up in patient miſery. Induſtry enabled her to give me an education; but the days of my youth commenced with hardſhip, ſorrow, and danger.—My companions lived happy around me, and had a pleaſing proſpect in their view, while bread and water only were my food, and no hopes joined to ſweeten it. But my father felt not that!

BARON [*to himſelf*].

He touches my heart.

FREDERICK.

After five years' abſence from my mother, I returned this very day, and found her dying in the ſtreets for want—Not even a hut to ſhelter her, or a pallet of ſtraw—But my father, he feels not that! He lives in a palace, ſleeps on the ſofteſt down, enjoys all the luxuries of the great; and when he dies, a funeral ſermon will praiſe his great benevolence, his Chriſtian charities.

BARON [*greatly agitated*].

What is your father's name?

FREDERICK.

—He took advantage of an innocent young woman, gained her affection by flattery and falſe promiſes; gave life to an unfortunate being, who was on the point of murdering his father.

BARON [*ſhuddering*].

Who is he?

FREDERICK.

Baron Wildenhaim.

[*The* Baron's *emotion expreſſes the ſenſe of amazement, guilt, ſhame, and horror.*]

FREDERICK.

In this houſe did you rob my mother of her honour; and in this houſe I am a ſacrifice for the crime. I am your priſoner—I will not be free—I am a robber—I give myſelf up.—You *ſhall* deliver me into the hands of juſtice—You ſhall accompany me to the ſpot of public execution. You ſhall hear in vain the chaplain's conſolation and injunctions. You ſhall find how I, in deſpair, will, to the laſt moment, call for retribution on my father.

BARON.

Stop! Be pacified—

FREDERICK.

—And when you turn your head from my extended corſe, you will behold my weeping mother—Need I paint how her eyes will greet you?

BARON.

Deſiſt—barbarian, ſavage, ſtop!

Enter Anhalt *alarmed.*

ANHALT.

What do I hear? What is this? Young man, I hope you have not made a ſecond attempt.

FREDERICK.

Yes; I have done what it was your place to do. I have made a ſinner tremble. [*points to the* Baron, *and exit*]

AN-

ANHALT.

What can this mean?—I do not comprehend—

BARON.

He is my ſon!—He is my ſon!—Go, Anhalt, — adviſe me — help me — Go to the poor woman, his mother—He can ſhow you the way—make haſte—ſpeed to protect her——

ANHALT.

But what am I to——

BARON.

Go.—Your heart will tell you how to act. [*Exit* Anhalt.] [Baron *diſtractedly.*] Who am I? What am I? Mad — raving —no —I have a ſon—A ſon! The braveſt—I will—I muſt—oh! [*with tenderneſs.*] Why have I not embraced him yet? [*increaſing his voice.*] why not preſſed him to my heart? Ah! ſee—[*looking after him*] —He flies from the caſtle—Who's there? Where are my attendants? [*Enter two ſervants*]. Follow him—bring the priſoner back.—But obſerve my command—treat him with reſpect—treat him as my ſon—and your maſter. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Inſide of the Cottage (as in Act II).*

AGATHA, COTTAGER, *and his* WIFE *diſcovered.*

AGATHA.

PRAY look and ſee if he is coming.

COTTAGER.

It is of no uſe. I have been in the road; have looked up and down; but neither ſee nor hear any thing of him.

WIFE.

Have a little patience.

AGATHA.

I wiſh you would ſtep out once more—I think he cannot be far off.

COTTAGER.

I will; I will go. [*Exit.*

WIFE.

If your ſon knew what heaven had ſent you, he would be here very ſoon.

AGATHA.

I feel ſo anxious ——

WIFE.

But why? I ſhould think a purſe of gold, ſuch as you have received, would make any body eaſy.

AGA-

AGATHA.

Where can he be ſo long? He has been gone four hours. Some ill muſt have befallen him.

WIFE.

It is ſtill broad day-light—don't think of any danger.—This evening we muſt all be merry. I'll prepare the ſupper. What a good gentleman our Baron muſt be! I am ſorry I ever ſpoke a word againſt him.

AGATHA.

How did he know I was here?

WIFE.

Heaven only can tell. The ſervant that brought the money was very ſecret.

AGATHA [*to herſelf*].

I am aſtoniſhed! I wonder! Oh! ſurely he has been informed—Why elſe ſhould he have ſent ſo much money?

Re-enter Cottager.

AGATHA.

Well!—not yet!

COTTAGER.

I might look till I am blind for him—but I ſaw our new Rector coming along the road; he calls in ſometimes. May be, he will this evening.

WIFE.

He is a very good gentleman; pays great attention to his pariſhioners; and where he can aſſiſt the poor, he is always ready.

Enter Mr. ANHALT.

ANHALT.

Good evening, friends.

BOTH.

BOTH.

Thank you, reverend Sir.

[*They both run to fetch him a chair*].

ANHALT.

I thank you, good people—I ſee you have a ſtranger here.

COTTAGER.

Yes, your Reverence; it is a poor ſick woman, whom I took in doors.

ANHALT.

You will be rewarded for it. [*to* Agatha.] May I beg leave to aſk your name?

AGATHA.

Ah! If we were alone ——

ANHALT.

Good neighbours, will you leave us alone for a few minutes? I have ſomething to ſay to this poor woman.

COTTAGER.

Wife, do you hear? Come along with me.

[*Exeunt* Cottager *and his* Wife.]

ANHALT.

Now ——

AGATHA.

Before I tell who I am, what I am, and what I was——I muſt beg to aſk——Are you of this country?

ANHALT.

No—I was born in Alſace.

AGATHA.

Did you know the late rector perſonally, whom you have ſucceeded?

AN-

ANHALT.

No.

AGATHA.

Then you are not acquainted with my narrative?

ANHALT.

Should I find you to be the perſon whom I have long been in ſearch of, your hiſtory is not altogether unknown to me.

AGATHA.

"That you have been in ſearch of!" Who gave you ſuch a commiſſion?

ANHALT.

A man, who, if it ſo prove, is much concerned for your misfortunes.

AGATHA.

How? Oh, Sir! tell me quickly—Whom do you think to find in me?

ANHALT.

Agatha Friburg.

AGATHA.

Yes, I am that unfortunate woman; and the man who pretends to take concern in my misfortunes is——Baron Wildenhaim——he who betrayed me, abandoned me and my child, and killed my parents.—He would now repair our ſufferings with this purſe of gold. [*Takes out the purſe.*] Whatever may be your errand, Sir, whether to humble, or to protect me, it is alike indifferent. I therefore requeſt you to take this money to him who ſent it. Tell him, my honour has never been ſaleable. Tell him, deſtitute as I am, even indigence will not tempt me to accept charity from my ſeducer. He deſpiſed my heart—I deſpiſe his gold.—He has trampled

trampled on me—I trample on his repreſentative. [*Throws the purſe on the ground.*]

ANHALT.

Be patient—I give you my word, that when the Baron ſent this preſent to an unfortunate woman, for whom her ſon had ſupplicated, he did not know that woman was Agatha.

AGATHA.

My ſon? what of my ſon?

ANHALT.

Do not be alarmed—The Baron met with an affectionate ſon, who begged for his ſick mother, and it affected him.

AGATHA.

Begged of the Baron! of his father!

ANHALT.

Yes; but they did not know each other; and the mother received the preſent on the ſon's account.

AGATHA.

Did not know each other? Where is my ſon?

ANHALT.

At the Caſtle.

AGATHA.

And ſtill unknown?

ANHALT.

Now he is known—an explanation has taken place;—and I am ſent here by the Baron, not to a ſtranger, but to Agatha Friburg—not with gold! his commiſſion was—"do what your heart directs you."

AGATHA.

How is my Frederick? How did the Baron receive him?

AN-

ANHALT.

I left him juſt in the moment the diſcovery was made. By this time your ſon is, perhaps, in the arms of his father.

AGATHA.

Oh! is it poſſible that a man, who has been twenty years deaf to the voice of nature, ſhould change ſo ſuddenly?

ANHALT.

I do not mean to juſtify the Baron, but—he has loved you—and fear of his noble kindred alone cauſed his breach of faith to you.

AGATHA.

But to deſert me wholly and wed another—

ANHALT.

War called him away—Wounded in the field, he was taken to the adjacent ſeat of a nobleman, whoſe only daughter, by anxious attention to his recovery, won his gratitude; and, influenced by the will of his worldly friends, he married. But no ſooner was I received into the family, and admitted to his confidence, than he related to me your ſtory; and at times would exclaim in anguiſh—"The proud imperious Baroneſs avenges the wrongs of my deſerted Agatha." Again, when he preſented me this living, and I left France to take poſſeſſion of it, his laſt words before we parted, were—"The moment you arrive at Wildenhaim, make all enquiries to find out my poor Agatha." Every letter I afterwards received from him contained "Still, ſtill, no tidings of my Agatha." And fate ordained it ſhould be ſo, till this fortunate day.

AGATHA.

What you have ſaid has made my heart overflow—where will this end?

ANHALT.

I know not yet the Baron's intentions: but your ſufferings demand immediate remedy: and one way only is left—Come with me to the caſtle. Do not ſtart—you ſhall be concealed in my apartments till you are called for.

AGATHA.

I go to the Baron's?—No.

ANHALT.

Go for the ſake of your ſon—reflect, that his fortunes may depend upon your preſence.

AGATHA.

And he is the only branch on which my hope ſtill bloſſoms: the reſt are withered.—I will forget my wrongs as a woman, if the Baron will atone to the mother—he ſhall have the woman's pardon, if he will merit the mother's thanks—[*after a ſtruggle*]—I *will* go to the caſtle—for the ſake of my Frederick, go even to his father. But where are my good hoſt and hoſteſs, that I may take leave, and thank them for their kindneſs?

ANHALT.

[*taking up the purſe which* Agatha *had thrown down*].
Here, good friend! Good woman!

Enter the COTTAGER *and his* WIFE.

WIFE.

Yes, yes, here am I.

ANHALT.

Good people, I will take your gueſt with me. You have acted an honeſt part, and therefore receive this reward for your trouble. [*He offers the purſe to the* Cottager, *who puts it by, and turns away*].

AN-

ANHALT [*to the* Wife].

Do *you* take it.

WIFE.

I always obey my paſtor. [*taking it*].

AGATHA.

Good bye. [*ſhaking hands with the Cottagers.*] For your hoſpitality to me, may ye enjoy continued happineſs.

COTTAGER.

Fare you well—fare you well.

WIFE.

If you find friends and get health, we won't trouble you to call on us again: but if you ſhould fall ſick or be in poverty, we ſhall take it very unkind if we don't ſee you.

[*Exeunt* Agatha *and* Anhalt *on one ſide*, Cottager *and his* Wife *on the other*].

SCENE II. *A room in the Caſtle.*

BARON *ſitting upon a ſopha.*—FREDERICK *ſtanding near him, with one hand preſſed between his*—*the* Baron *riſes.*

BARON.

Been in battle too!—I am glad to hear it. You have known hard ſervices, but now they are over, and joy and happineſs will ſucceed.—The reproach of your birth ſhall be removed, for I will acknowledge you my ſon, and heir to my eſtate.

FREDERICK.

And my mother——

BARON.

She ſhall live in peace and affluence. Do you think I would leave your mother unprovided, unprotected? No! About a mile from this caſtle I have an eſtate called Weldendorf—there ſhe ſhall live, and call her own whatever it pro-

duces. There ſhe ſhall reign, and be ſole miſtreſs of the little paradiſe. There her paſt ſufferings ſhall be changed to peace and tranquillity. On a ſummer's morning, we, my ſon, will ride to viſit her; paſs a day, a week with her; and in this ſocial intercourſe time will glide pleaſantly.

FREDERICK.

And, pray, my Lord—under what name is my mother to live then?

BARON [*confuſed*].

How?

FREDERICK.

In what capacity?—As your domeſtic—or as——

BARON.

That we will ſettle afterwards.

FREDERICK.

Will you allow me, Sir, to leave the room a little while, that you may have leiſure to conſider *now?*

BARON.

I do not know how to explain myſelf in reſpect to your mother more than I have done already.

FREDERICK.

My fate, whatever it may be, ſhall never part me from her. This is my firm reſolution, upon which I call Heaven to witneſs! My Lord, it muſt be Frederick of Wildenhaim, and Agatha of Wildenhaim—or Agatha Friburg, and Frederick Friburg. [*Exit.*

BARON.

Young man! Frederick!—[*calling after him.*] Haſty indeed! would make conditions with his father. No, no, that muſt not be. I juſt now thought how well I had arranged my plans—

had

had relieved my heart of every burden, when, a ſecond time, he throws a mountain upon it. Stop, friend conſcience, why do you take his part?—For twenty years thus you have uſed me, and been my torture.

Enter Mr. ANHALT.

Ah! Anhalt, I am glad you are come. My conſcience and myſelf are at variance.

ANHALT.

Your conſcience is in the right.

BARON.

You don't know yet what the quarrel is.

ANHALT.

Conſcience is always right — becauſe it never ſpeaks unleſs it *is* ſo.

BARON.

Ay, a man of your order can more eaſily attend to its whiſpers, than an old warrior. The ſound of cannon has made him hard of hearing. —I have found my ſon again, Mr. Anhalt, a fine, brave young man—I mean to make him my heir—Am I in the right?

ANHALT.

Perfectly.

BARON.

And his mother ſhall live in happineſs—My eſtate, Weldendorf, ſhall be hers—I'll give it to her, and ſhe ſhall make it her reſidence. Don't I do right?

ANHALT.

No.

BARON [*ſurprized*].

No? And what elſe ſhould I do?

ANHALT [*forcibly*].

Marry her.

BARON [*ſtarting*].

I marry her!

AN-

ANHALT.

Baron Wildenhaim is a man who will not act inconſiſtently.—As this is my opinion, I expect your reaſons, if you do not.

BARON.

Would you have me marry a beggar?

ANHALT [*after a pauſe*].

Is that your only objection?

BARON [*confuſed*].

I have more—many more.

ANHALT.

May I beg to know them likewiſe?

BARON.

My birth!

ANHALT.

Go on.

BARON.

My relations would deſpiſe me.

ANHALT.

Go on.

BARON [*in anger*].

'Sdeath! are not theſe reaſons enough?—I know no other.

ANHALT.

Now, then, it is my turn to ſtate mine for the advice I have given you. But firſt, I preſume to aſk a few queſtions.—Did Agatha, through artful inſinuation, gain your affection? or did ſhe give you cauſe to ſuppoſe her inconſtant?

BARON.

Neither—but for me, ſhe was always virtuous and good.

ANHALT.

Did it coſt you trouble and earneſt entreaty to make her otherwiſe?

BA-

BARON [*angrily*].

Yes.

ANHALT.

You pledged your honour?

BARON [*confuſed*].

Yes.

ANHALT.

Called God to witneſs?

BARON [*more confuſed*].

Yes.

ANHALT.

The witneſs you called at that time was the Being who ſees you now. What you gave in pledge was your honour, which you muſt redeem. Therefore thank Heaven that it is in your *power* to redeem it. By marrying Agatha the ranſom's made: and ſhe brings a dower greater than any princeſs can beſtow—peace to your conſcience. If you then eſteem the value of this portion, you will not heſitate a moment to exclaim,—Friends, wiſh me joy, I will marry Agatha.

[BARON, *in great agitation, walks backwards and forwards, then takes* Anhalt *by the hand.*]

BARON.

Friend, wiſh me joy—I will *marry* Agatha."

ANHALT.

I do wiſh you joy.

BARON.

Where is ſhe?

ANHALT.

In the caſtle—in my apartments here—I conducted her through the garden, to avoid curioſity.

BARON.

Well, then, this is the wedding-day. This very evening you ſhall give us your bleſſing.

AN-

ANHALT.

Not ſo ſoon, not ſo private. The whole village was witneſs of Agatha's ſhame—the whole village muſt be witneſs of Agatha's re-eſtabliſhed honour. Do you conſent to this?

BARON.

I do.

ANHALT.

Now the quarrel is decided. Now is your conſcience quiet?

BARON.

As quiet as an infant's. I only wiſh the firſt interview was over.

ANHALT.

Compoſe yourſelf. Agatha's heart is to be your judge.

Enter AMELIA.

BARON.

Amelia, you have a brother.

AMELIA.

I have juſt heard ſo, my Lord; and rejoice to find the news confirmed by you.

BARON.

I know, my dear Amelia, I can repay you for the loſs of Count Caſſel; but what return can I make to you for the loſs of half your fortune?

AMELIA.

My brother's love will be ample recompenſe.

BARON.

I will reward you better. Mr. Anhalt, the battle I have juſt fought, I owe to myſelf: the victory I gained, I owe to you. A man of your principles, at once a teacher and an example of virtue, exalts his rank in life to a level with the nobleſt

nobleſt family—and I ſhall be proud to receive you as my ſon.

ANHALT [*falling on his knees, and taking the* Baron's *hand*].

My Lord, you overwhelm me with confuſion, as well as with joy.

BARON.

My obligations to you are infinite—Amelia ſhall pay the debt. [*Gives her to him.*]

AMELIA.

Oh, my dear father! [*embracing the* Baron] what bleſſings have you beſtowed on me in one day. [*to* Anhalt.] I will be your ſcholar ſtill, and uſe more diligence than ever to pleaſe my *maſter*.

ANHALT.

His preſent happineſs admits of no addition.

BARON.

Nor does mine—And yet there is another taſk to perform that will require more fortitude, more courage, than this has done! A trial that! —[*burſts into tears*]—I cannot prevent them—Let me—let me—A few minutes will bring me to myſelf—Where is Agatha?

ANHALT.

I will go, and fetch her. [*Exit* Anhalt *at an upper entrance.*]

BARON.

Stop! Let me firſt recover a little. [*Walks up and down, ſighing bitterly—looks at the door through which* Anhalt *left the room.*] That door ſhe will come from—That was once the dreſſing-room of my mother—From that door I have ſeen her come many times—have been delighted with her lovely ſmiles—How ſhall I now behold her

altered looks! Frederick muſt be my mediator; —Where is he? Where is my ſon?—Now I am ready—my heart is prepared to receive her—Haſte! haſte! Bring her in.

[*He looks ſtedfaſtly at the door*—Anhalt *leads on* Agatha — *The* Baron *runs and claſps her in his arms* — *Supported by him, ſhe ſinks on a chair which* Amelia *places in the middle of the ſtage*— *The* Baron *kneels by her ſide, holding her hand.*]

BARON.

Agatha, Agatha, do you know this voice?

AGATHA.

Wildenhaim.

BARON.

Can you forgive me?

AGATHA.

I forgive you. [*embracing him*].

FREDERICK [*as he enters*].

I hear the voice of my mother!—Ha! mother! father!

[Frederick *throws himſelf on his knees by the other ſide of his mother* — *She claſps him in her arms.* — Amelia *is placed on the ſide of her father attentively viewing* Agatha—Anhalt *ſtands on the ſide of* Frederick *with his hands gratefully raiſed to Heaven.*]——*The curtain ſlowly drops.*

MVSEVM BRITAN NICVM

END.

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY THOMAS PALMER, ESQ.
OF THE TEMPLE.

SPOKEN BY MR. MUNDEN.

OUR Drama now ended, I'll take up your time
Juſt a moment or two, in defence of my *rhime* —
* " Tho' I hope that among you are *ſome* who *admir'd*
" What I've hitherto ſaid, dare I hope none are tir'd?
" But whether ye have, or have not heard enough,
" Or whether nice critics will think it all ſtuff;
" To myſelf *rhime* has ever appear'd, I muſt own,
" In its nature a ſort of *philoſopher's ſtone;*
" And if Chymiſts wou'd uſe it, they'd not make a pother,
" And puzzle their brains to find out any other."
Indeed 'tis moſt ſtrange and ſurpriſing to me
That all folks in *rhiming* their int'reſt can't ſee;
For I'm ſure if its uſe were quite common with men,
The world would roll on juſt as pleaſant again.
" 'Tis ſaid, that while ORPHEUS was ſtriking his lyre,
" Trees and brutes danc'd along to the ſound of the wire;
" That AMPHION to walls ſoon converted the glebes,
" And they roſe, as he ſung, to a city call'd Thebes;
" I ſuppoſe *they* were *Butlers* (like me) of that time,
" And the tale ſhows our ſires knew the wonders of *rhime.*"
From time immemorial, your lovers, we find,
When their miſtreſſes' hearts have been proud and unkind,
Have reſorted to *rhime*; and indeed it appears
That a *rhime* would do more than a bucket of tears.
Of love, from experience, I ſpeak—odds my life!
I ſhall never forget how I courted my wife:
She had offers in plenty; but always ſtood neuter,
'Till I, with my pen, ſtarted forth as a ſuitor;
Yet I made no mean preſent of *ribband* or *bonnet*,
My preſent was caught from the ſtars—'twas a *ſonnet.*
" And now you know this, ſure 'tis needleſs to ſay,
" That proſe was neglected, and *rhime* won the day—
" But its potent effects you as well may diſcover
" In the *huſband* and *wife*, as in *miſtreſs* and *lover*;

* The lines between inverted commas are not ſpoken.

" There

EPILOGUE.

" There are ſome of ye here, who, like me, I conjecture,
" Have been lull'd into ſleep by a good *curtain lecture*.
" But that's a mere trifle ; you'll ne'er come to blows,
" If you'll only avoid that dull enemy, *proſe*.
" Adopt, then, my plan, and the very next time,
" That in words you fall out, let them fall into *rhime* ;
" Thus your ſharpeſt diſputes will conclude very ſoon,
" And from jangling to jingling you'll chime into *tune*.
" If my wife were to call me a *drunken old ſot*,
" I ſhou'd merely juſt aſk her, what Butler is not ?
" And bid her take care that ſhe don't go to pot.
" So our ſquabbles continue a very ſhort ſeaſon,
" If ſhe yields to my *rhime*—I allow ſhe has reaſon."
Independent of this I conceive *rhime* has weight
In the higher employments of church and of ſtate,
And would in my mind ſuch advantages draw,
'Tis a pity that *rhime* is not ſanctioned by law ;
" For 'twould *really* be ſerving us all to impoſe
" A capital fine on the man who ſpoke proſe."
Mark the pleader who clacks, in his client's behalf,
His technical ſtuff for three hours and a half ;
Or the fellow who tells you a long ſtupid ſtory,
And over and over the ſame lays before ye ;
Or the member who raves till the whole houſe are doſing.
What d'ye ſay of ſuch men? Why, you ſay they are proſing.
So, of courſe, then, if *proſe* is ſo tedious a *crime*,
It of conſequence follows, there's *virtue* in *rhime*.
The beſt piece of proſe that I've heard a long while,
Is what gallant Nelſon has ſent from THE NILE.
And had he but told us the ſtory in *rhime*,
What a thing 'twou'd be ; but, perhaps, he'd no time.
So, I'll do it myſelf—Oh ! 'tis glorious news !
Nine *ſail* of the line! Juſt a ſhip for each Muſe.
As I live, there's an end of the French and their navy—
Sir John Warren has ſent the Breſt fleet to Old Davy.
'Tis in the Gazette, and that, every one knows.
Is ſure to be truth, tho' 'tis written in proſe.